The ENGLISH HOME

21 years ANNIVERSARY

Celebrating the essence of English style

November 2021 | Issue 201 | £4.99 | UK Edition

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Atmospheric Jacobean manor house to vibrant Victorian London flat

43 STYLE SECRETS for decorating townhouses by leading interior designers

EXPERT GUIDES

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A letter from home

Turn to page 76 to discover interior designers' secrets for decorating period townhouses in practical yet sympathetic style.

The aesthetic of English period townhouses is one that's captured our hearts this month, particularly those of the Georgian and Regency eras. It's hard not to be bowled over by their considered proportions and balanced classical symmetry. Whilst they have 'great bones' such as large sash windows, high-ceilinged rooms and original floorboards, their interiors, of course, need decorating sympathetically and with flair to transform them into 'homes'. Not least today, when the original layouts often need to be adapted to suit our current ways of living (and working) at home. With this in mind, we have consulted leading interior designers to discover their insights and advice for decorating townhouses practically and beautifully (*p76*).

Within these pages you will also find tempting, indulgent new buys to update both town and country interiors (*p22 and p28*), and expert guides on choosing fireplaces and woodburners (*p113*), window dressings (*p102*), and upholstered seating (*p93*) to suit your lifestyle.

The four houses featured span a Grade II* listed seventeenth-century hall in the country to a colourful, characterful flat in the city. You'll also find a period apartment filled with antiques and a city townhouse richly decorated in country style – which goes to show that city homes can successfully take inspiration from the country, just as elements of townhouse style can be adopted in rural locations.

English interiors are, of course, as unique as we are, and we hope this townhouse edition will provide pleasure, insights and inspiration in equal measure.

Samantha

Samantha Scott-Jeffries, Editor

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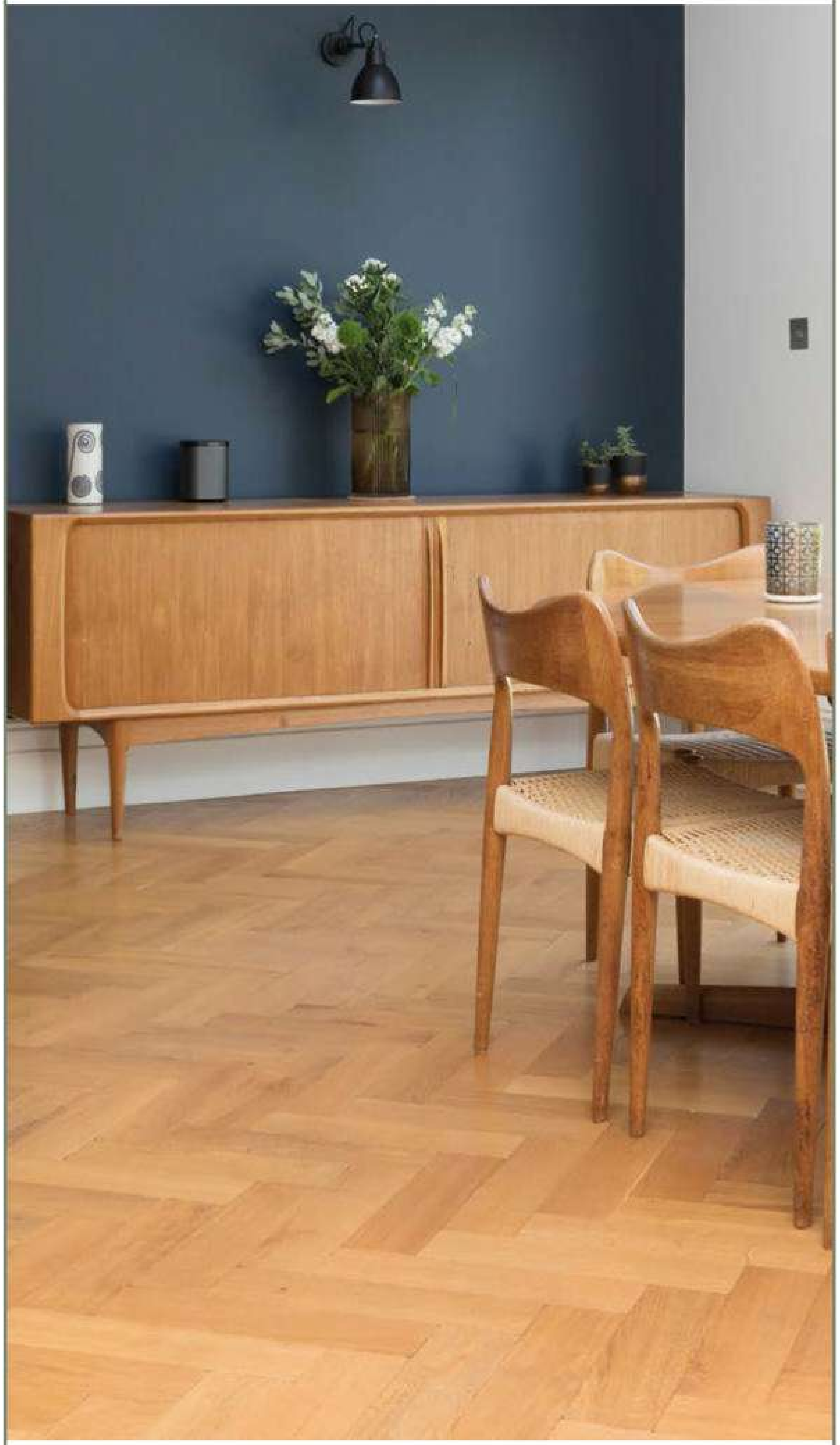

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The English Home, Jubilee House,
2 Jubilee Place, London SW3 3TQ
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Website theenglishhome.co.uk
Advertising/Publishing 020 7349 3700
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Senior Sales Executive Alice Leeson
020 7349 3711; *alice.leeson@chelseamagazines.com*
Sales Executive Laurna Barry
020 7349 3712; *laurna.barry@chelseamagazines.com*
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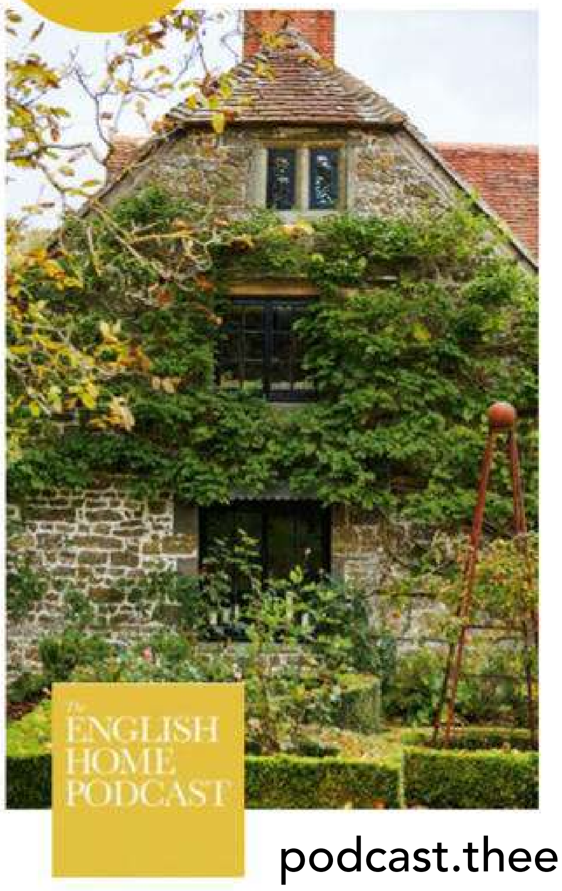

✢ **Leading interior designer KIT KEMP shares insights on creating exciting and unique interiors full of personality.**

✢ High-profile floral stylist WILLOW CROSSLEY talks about her favourite English autumn flowers and how best to display them at home.

podcast.theenglishhome.co.uk

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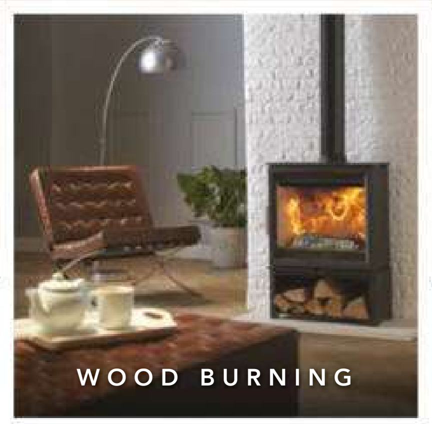
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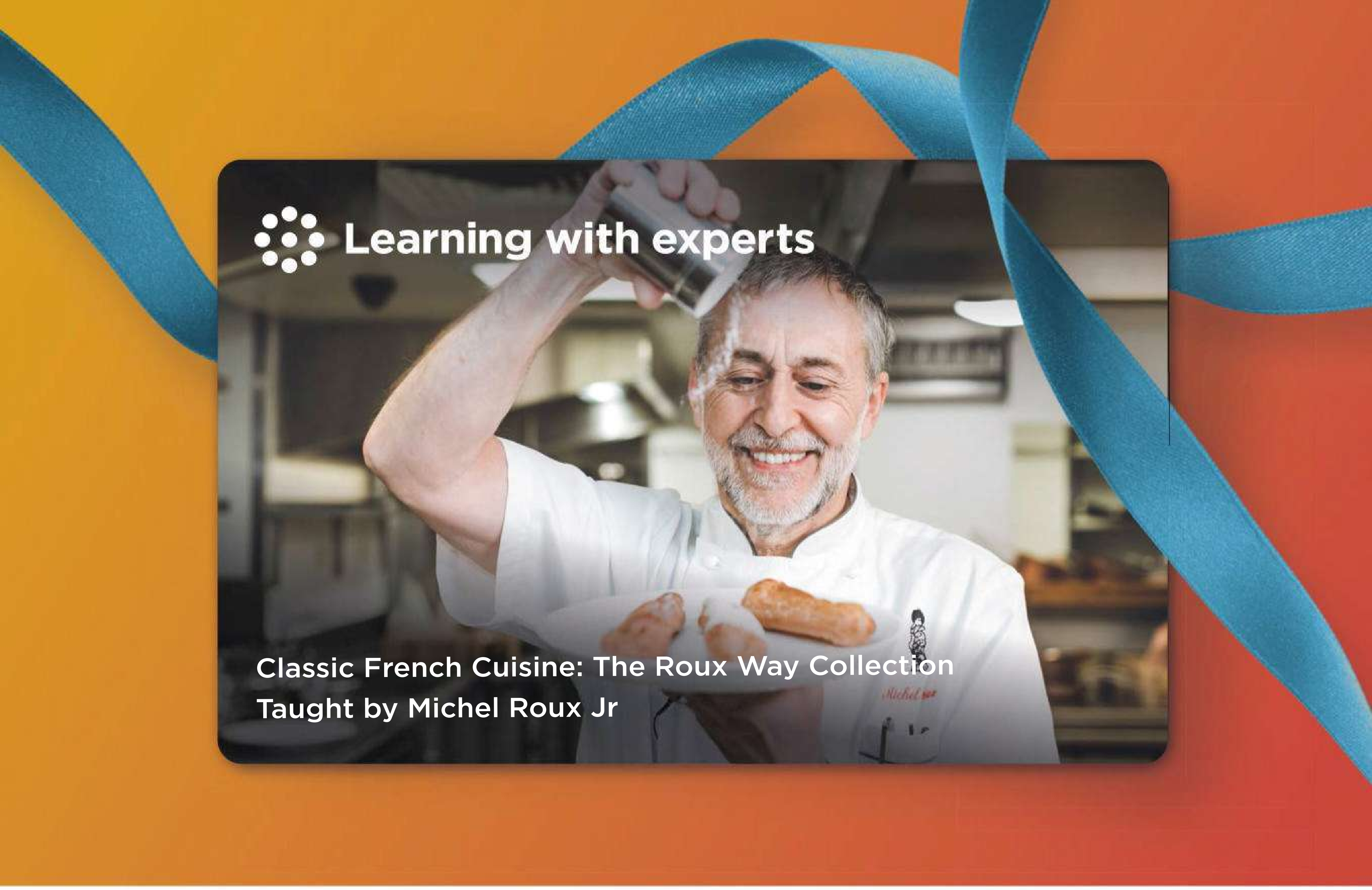
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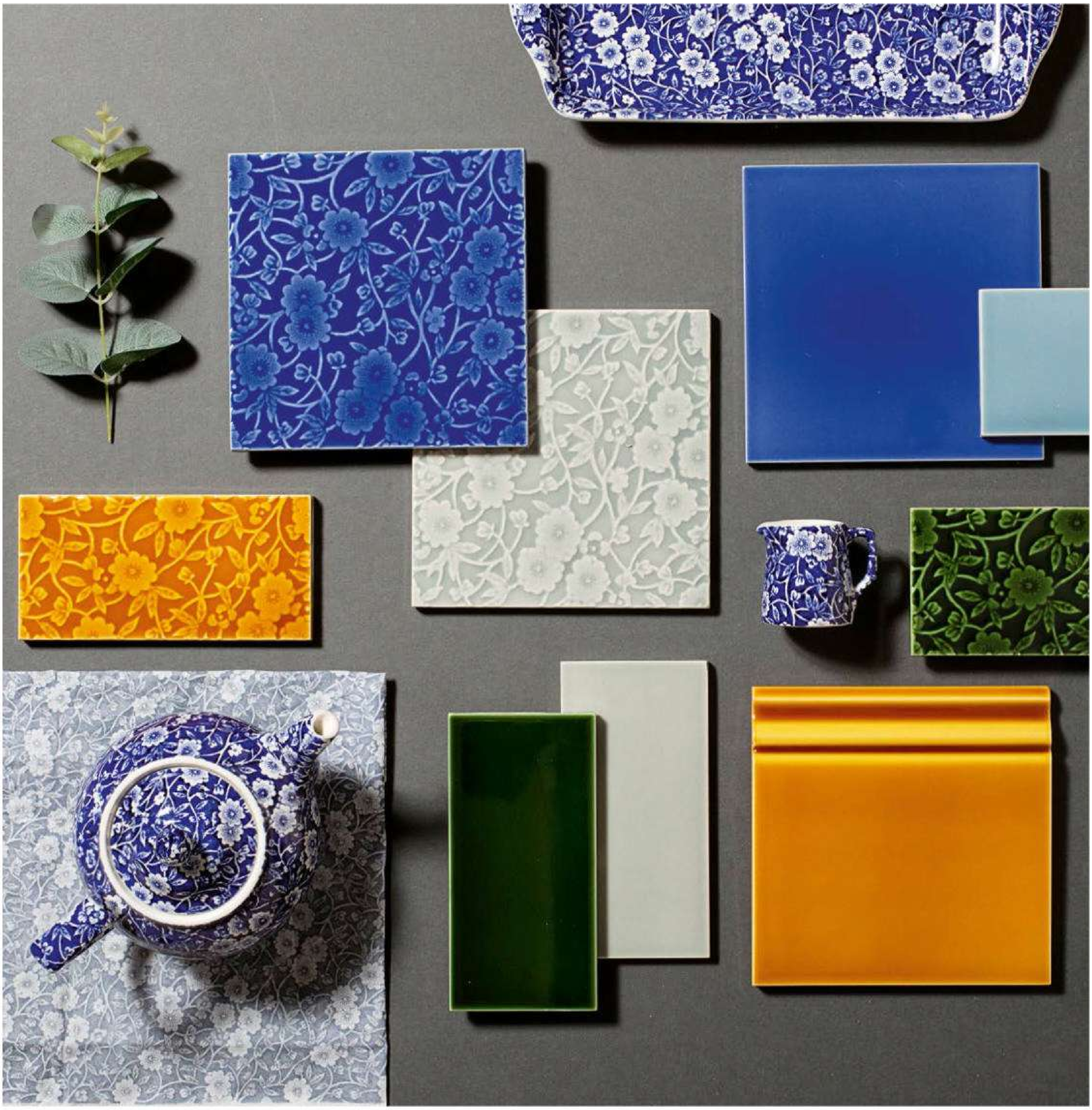


SPOTLIGHT ON...

Burleigh x Craven Dunnill Jackfield

English heritage companies Burleigh and Craven Dunnill Jackfield have collaborated to produce a striking new range of tiles. Bearing Burleigh's 1968 Calico pattern, the tiles are available in Aquamarine, Cobalt, Laurel, Flame and Smoke. The glaze acts like a stained glass window, highlighting the exquisite detail in the floral designs.

Burleigh was founded in Stoke-on-Trent in 1851 and is the last pottery in the world to practice the Victorian method of under-glaze tissue transfer printing. Craven Dunnill Jackfield began in Shropshire in 1872 and its decorative tiles can be found in the Palace Of Westminster and London Underground, plus elegant homes and hospitality establishments around the world. Both companies proudly use traditional materials in the creation of handmade English craft works of distinction. *burleigh.co.uk; cdjackfield.com* ›

Crowning Creativity: London Design Festival

London Design Medals were recently bestowed upon two highly skilled interiors talents

Design Pioneer

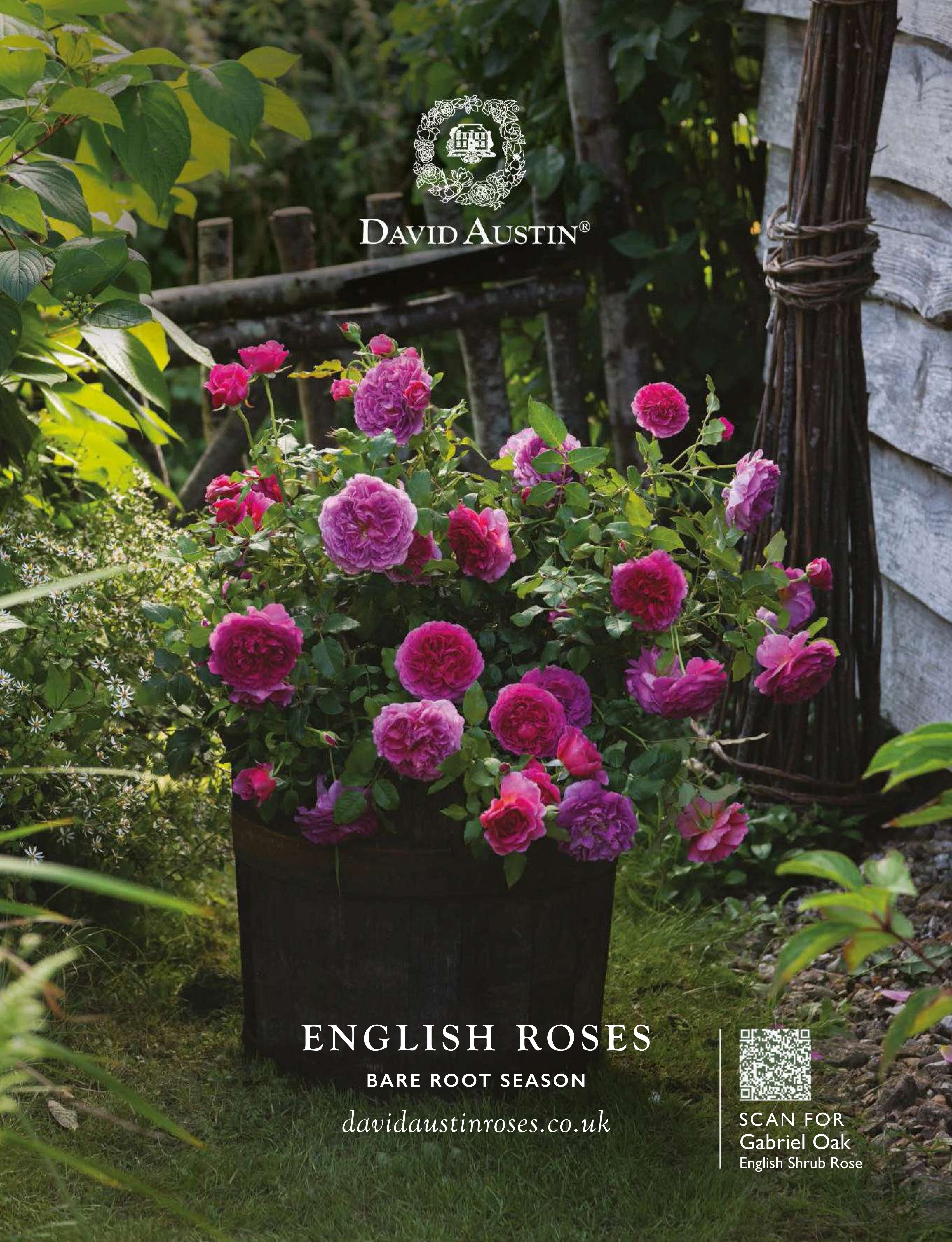
Ilse Crawford CBE, Studioilse

London Design Festival describes The London Design Medal as "the highest accolade bestowed upon an individual who has distinguished themselves within the industry and demonstrated consistent design excellence". This year's recipient, Ilse Crawford, was also awarded a CBE in Her Majesty The Queen's 2021 New Year Honours List. A visionary designer and founder of Studioilse, she has pioneered 'humanistic' design to promote postive mental and environmental impacts. Studying history and history of architecture at university led to her deep understanding of the symbiotic relationship between architecture, design and human behaviour. *studioilse.com*

Impactful & Impeccable

Designer-maker-artist Mac Collins

This year's Emerging Design Medal, which "recognises an impact made on the design scene within five or so years of graduation," according to London Design Festival, has gone to designer, maker and artist Mac Collins from Nottingham. Having only graduated three years ago with a degree in 3D Design, he has already become known and won awards for his narrative-rich, impactful and impeccable furniture and objects. Celebrating – and cleverly manipulating – the inherent beauty of the materials he works with, he weaves personal and cultural narratives into his exquisite creations. In addition to this, as a university lecturer, he is already mentoring the next generation of designers. *maccollins.com* ▶



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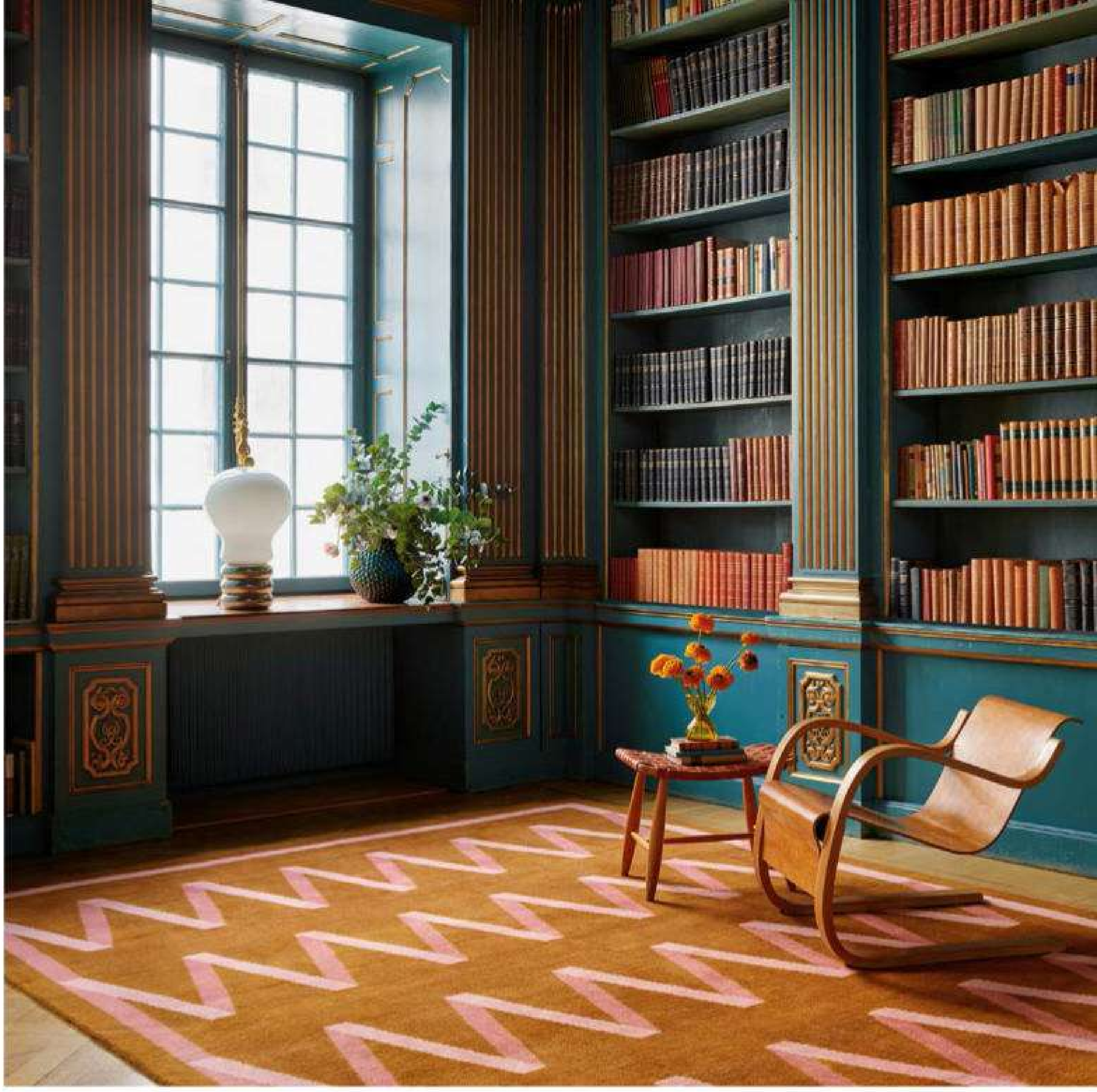

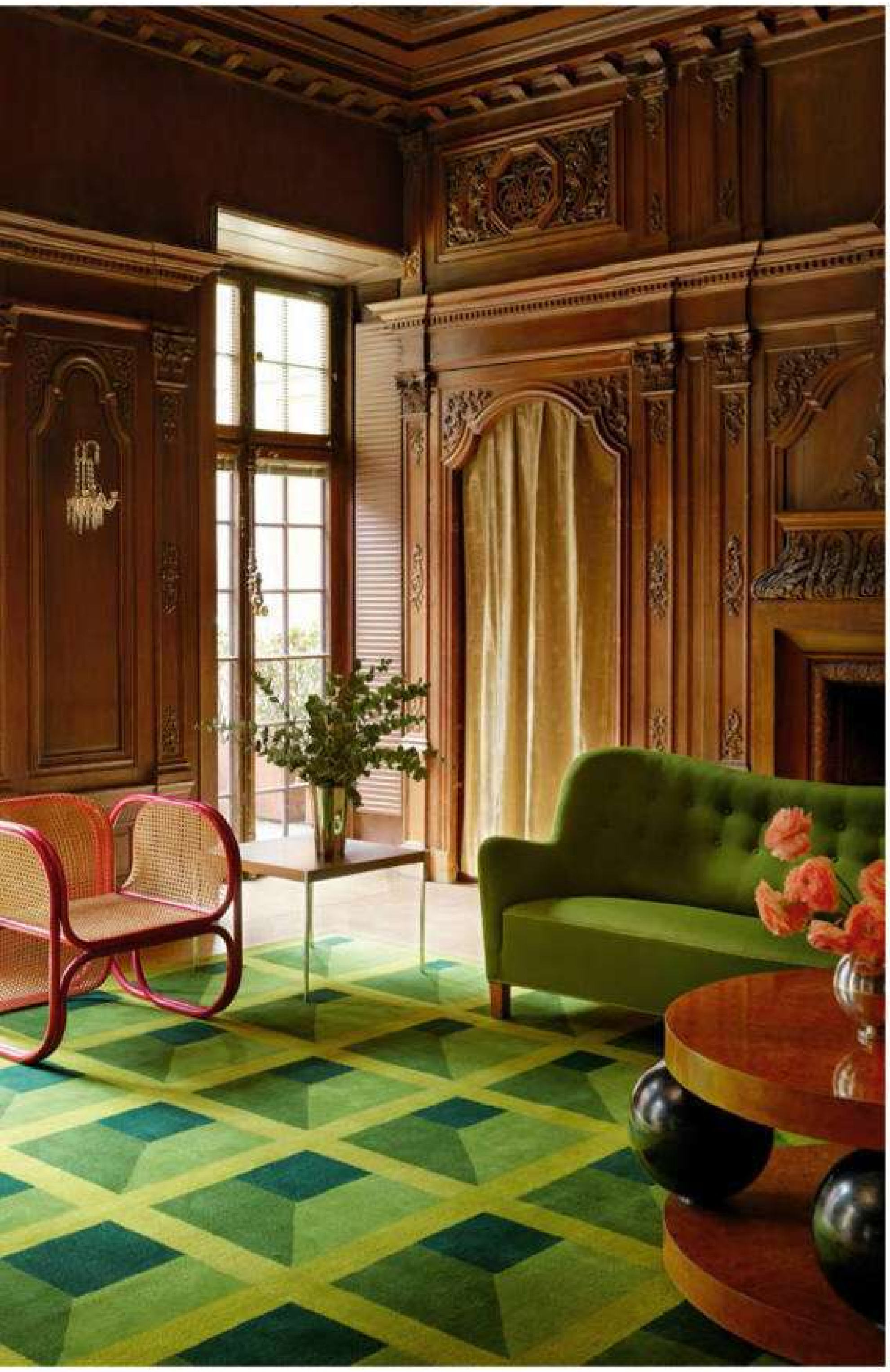

Entwined Through Time

Campbell-Rey unveils its divine Nordic Knots rug collaboration

Campbell-Rey is without question one of the most exciting interior design studios of today, and Duncan Campbell and Charlotte Rey's next move is always eagerly anticipated. The London duo have just unveiled their new collaboration with Nordic Knots – a Gustavian-inspired rug collection.

The three hand-knotted rugs – Folding Ribbon, Garden Maze and Climbing Vine – combine colourful and art deco-influenced sensibilities with the floral motifs of Gustavian style, the Swedish take on French neoclassicism dating back to the 1780s.

Charlotte is originally from Sweden and Duncan was born in Edinburgh. Interplay is key to the magic of Campbell-Rey. "Our work is often about the mix between styles and periods, and the exciting dialogues this can create," says Charlotte.

"Often Scandinavian design today conjures up images of minimalism or neutral colour palettes," says Duncan. "But if one looks back through history, especially to Swedish design movements like Gustavian or Swedish Grace, they were very decorative with a wide range of inspirations including flora and fauna, often very colourful. This really resonated with us."

Hand-knotted by skilled, Goodweave-certified weavers in India, each rug encapsulates the colour, wit and language of form inherent in the Campbell-Rey design DNA. Raspberry pink, wisteria lilac, deep amber, chartreuse and four greens sing out.

"The rugs feel very inviting, warm and soft, but also they add a bit of fun and unexpected detail to a room," says Charlotte. Duncan says: "They're a wonderful way to add colour, structure and texture to a room, or as with the Climbing Vine, to frame a dining table or a seating group."

campbell-rey.com; nordicknots.com ▶

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Bring the House home

Design destination showcases Soho House private members' club style

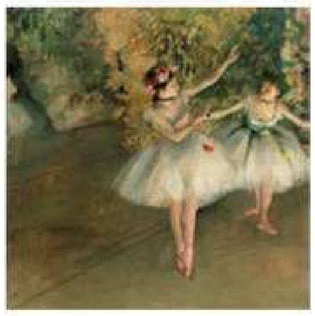
With exclusive private members' clubs in the UK and across the globe, Soho House has become synonymous with cutting-edge style and luxury. Members kept asking where they could buy the things they saw in Soho House venues, so founder Nick Jones created an interiors brand "to bring the House home".

Soho Home is inspired by 26 years of Soho House design heritage, mirroring the look and feel of Soho Houses around the world with hand-crafted furniture, luxury textiles, lighting and tableware for relaxed living. For an immersive experience to explore the brand, visit the new Soho Home Studio in Duke of York Square on the King's Road in London's Chelsea, due to open imminently as this magazine went to press.

As well as offering Soho Home's full interiors range and access to its interior design and made-to-order furniture services, it has a florist, space for creative workshops and events, a coffee shop and a gallery of rotating collections by Soho House members. These include established and up-and-coming creatives such as designers Henry Holland and Chi Atanga, ceramicist Marta Bonilla and florist Milli Proust.

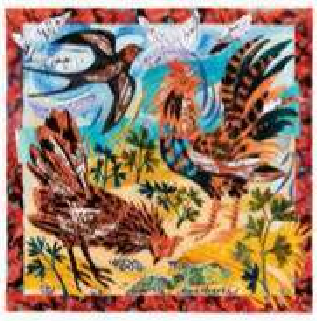
Located in a former chapel built in 1824 as part of the Royal Military School, and presented over two floors, this interiors destination also showcases the brand's new-season collection inspired by cities with existing and forthcoming Soho Houses, such as Hong Kong and Rome. *sohohome.com*

Diary



Masterpieces by an Gogh, Monet, Degas, Renoir and more will go on show at The Courtauld gallery in London when it reopens this month after a multi-million-pound three-year restoration project. *courtauld.ac.uk*

V&A visitors will be able to marvel at three Fabergé Imperial Easter Eggs, on show in the UK for the first time, along with over 200 other items by the iconic goldsmith in a new exhibition from 20 November to May 2022. *vam.ac.uk*

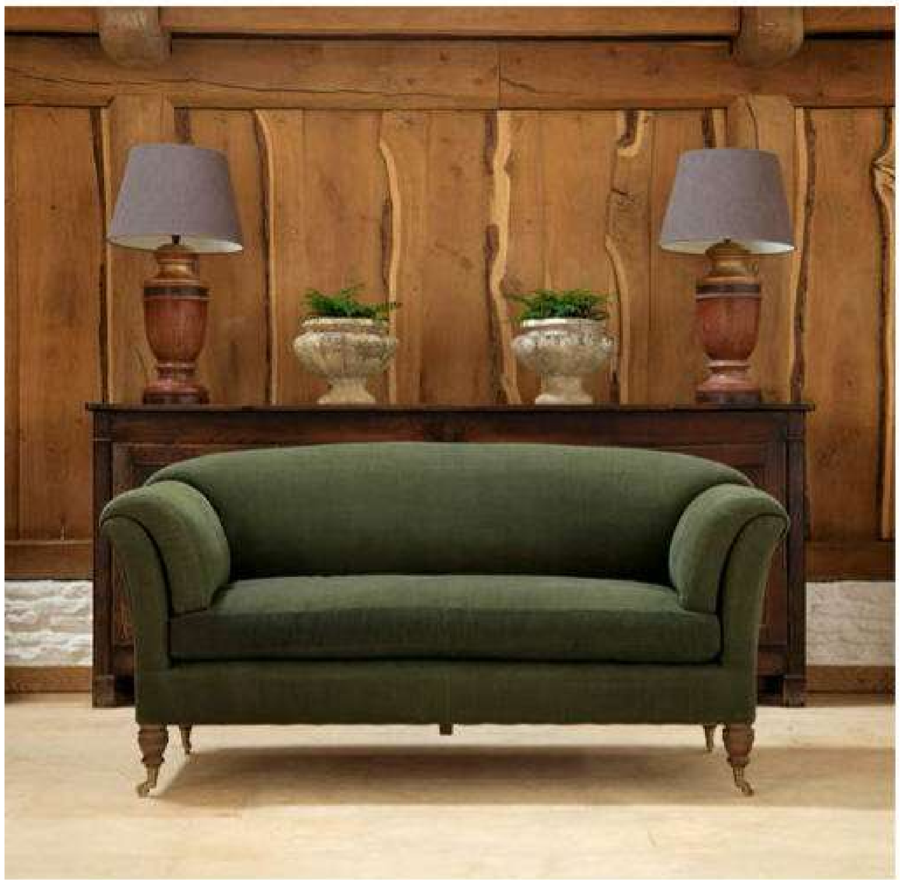


Artist and designer Mark Hearld will showcase his nature-inspired artworks at Yorkshire Sculpture Park from 13 November to 6 February 2022. *ysp.org.uk* ■

FEATURE SARAH FEELEY **PHOTOGRAPHS** P16 ILSE CRAWFORD (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) © MARSY HILD THORSDOTTIR, © MAGNUS MARDING, CASPER SEJERSEN, LIT MA; MAC COLLINS (RIGHT) © GEORGE HOWARD REES-JONES, (MAIN) © DAVID CLEVELAND, (INSET) © JUSSI PUIKKONEN. P18 (PORTRAIT) © HARRY CROWDER. P21 (SOHO HOME) SOHO HOUSE & CO; (DIARY FROM TOP) EDGAR GERMAIN HILAIRE DEGAS, TWO DANCERS ON A STAGE, 1874, OIL ON CANVAS, THE COURTAULD, LONDON (SAMUEL COURTAULD TRUST) © THE COURTAULD; THE ALEXANDER PALACE EGG, FABERGE 1908 © THE MOSCOW KREMLIN MUSEUMS; © RED PHOTOGRAPHY.

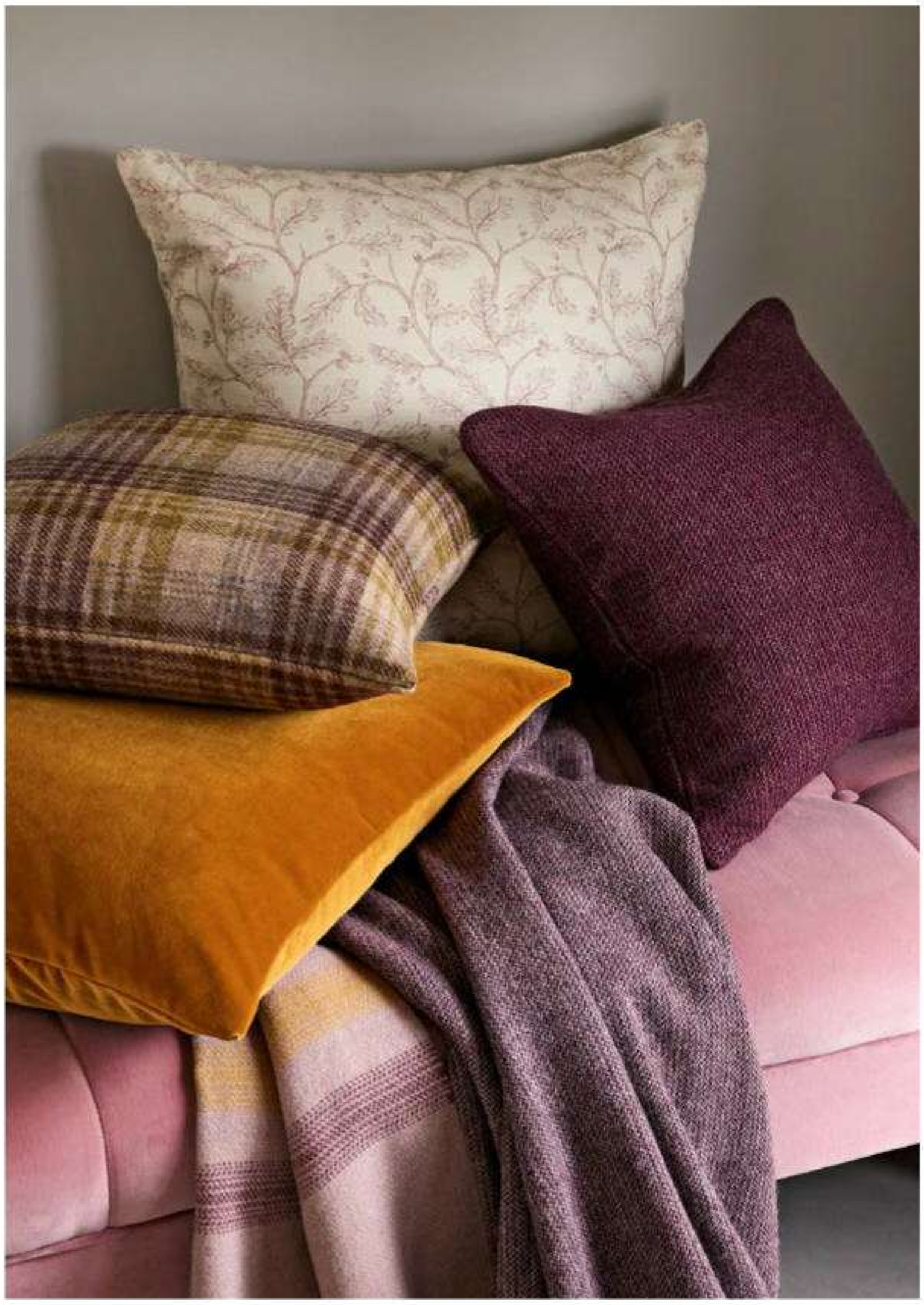
DESIGN DISCOVERIES

Cosy up for autumn with comforting colours and warm inviting textures



SUSTAINABLE LUXURY

Created with a focus on sustainability, provenance and artisanship, the Vintage Cloth Collection from bespoke furniture maker Lorfords sees each of the eight colourways hand-dyed in small batches using entirely natural materials. *The Belgravia Sofa in Dirty Sage hand-dyed vintage linen, £10,320, Lorfords Contemporary*

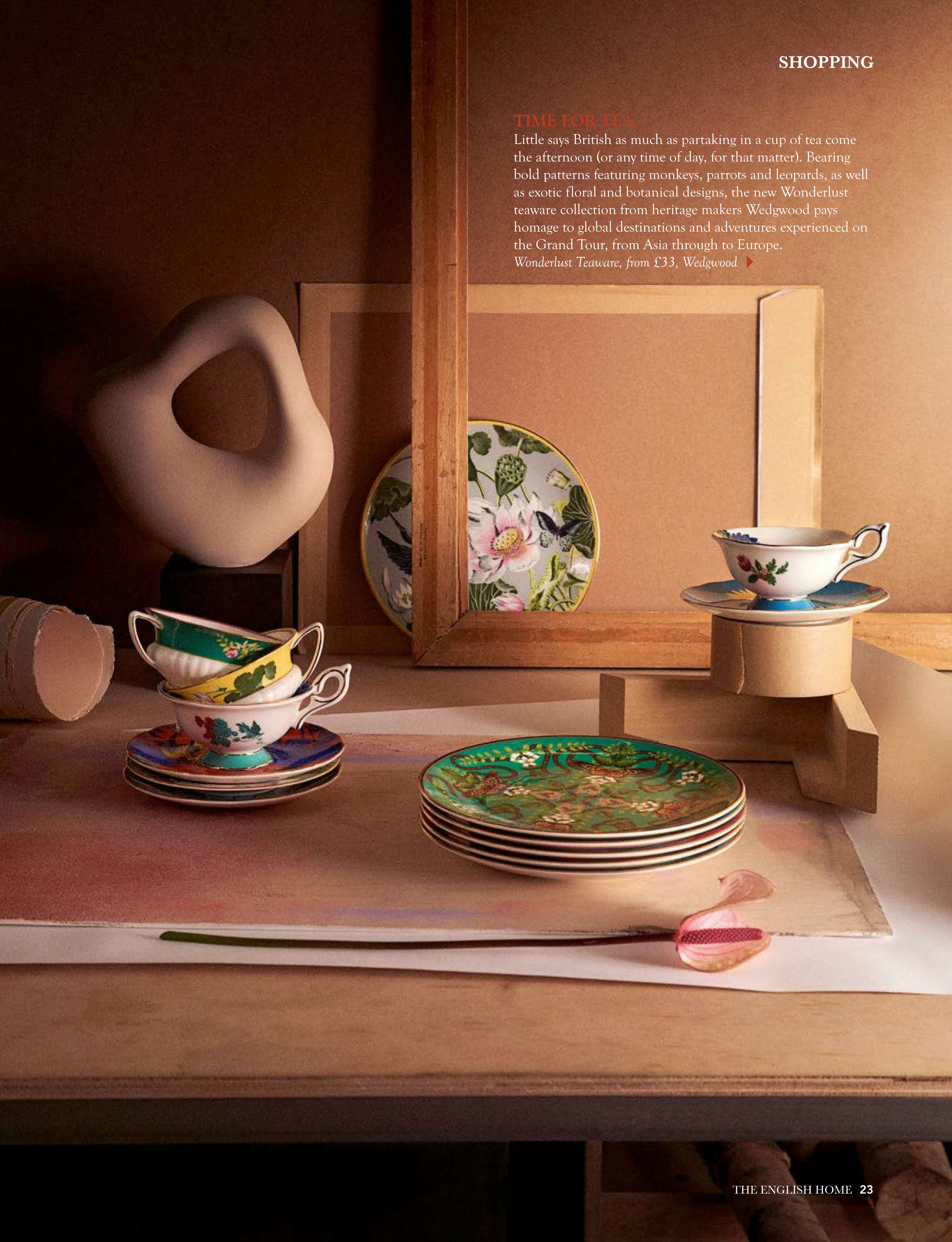


AUTUMN COMFORT

The shifting shades of autumnal woodland walks are captured in textile forms amidst Neptune's new seasonal collection – layered here in tactile tweed, soft velvet and warm wool, they lend a cosy touch perfect for creaing an inviting backdrop. *Cushions (clockwise from bottom left): Florence, Isla Finch, £82; Grace, Harris Tweed, £112; Grace, Francesca, £90; Kersey, £102. Arthur footstool, £515. Throws (from left): Henleaze, £215; Kersey, £325, all Neptune*

INSPIRED BY DANCE

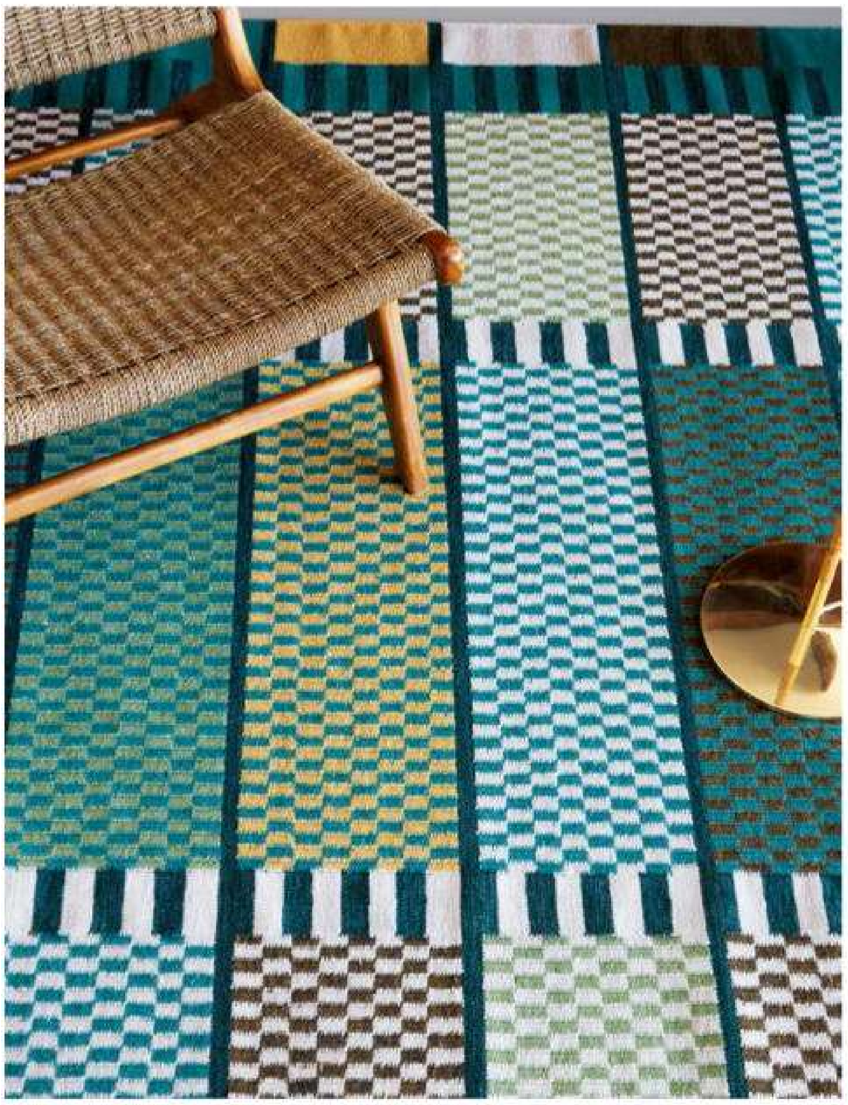
The magic and romance of ballet shaped the new pendant lights from design studio Lam Lighting. The second collection from the brand, founded in lockdown in spring this year, the tutu-inspired fine ceramic shades are handcrafted in Britain and named after key characters from the world of dance. *The Ballet Collection (seen here – Petite Giselle), from £88, Lam Lighting*



TIME FOR TEA

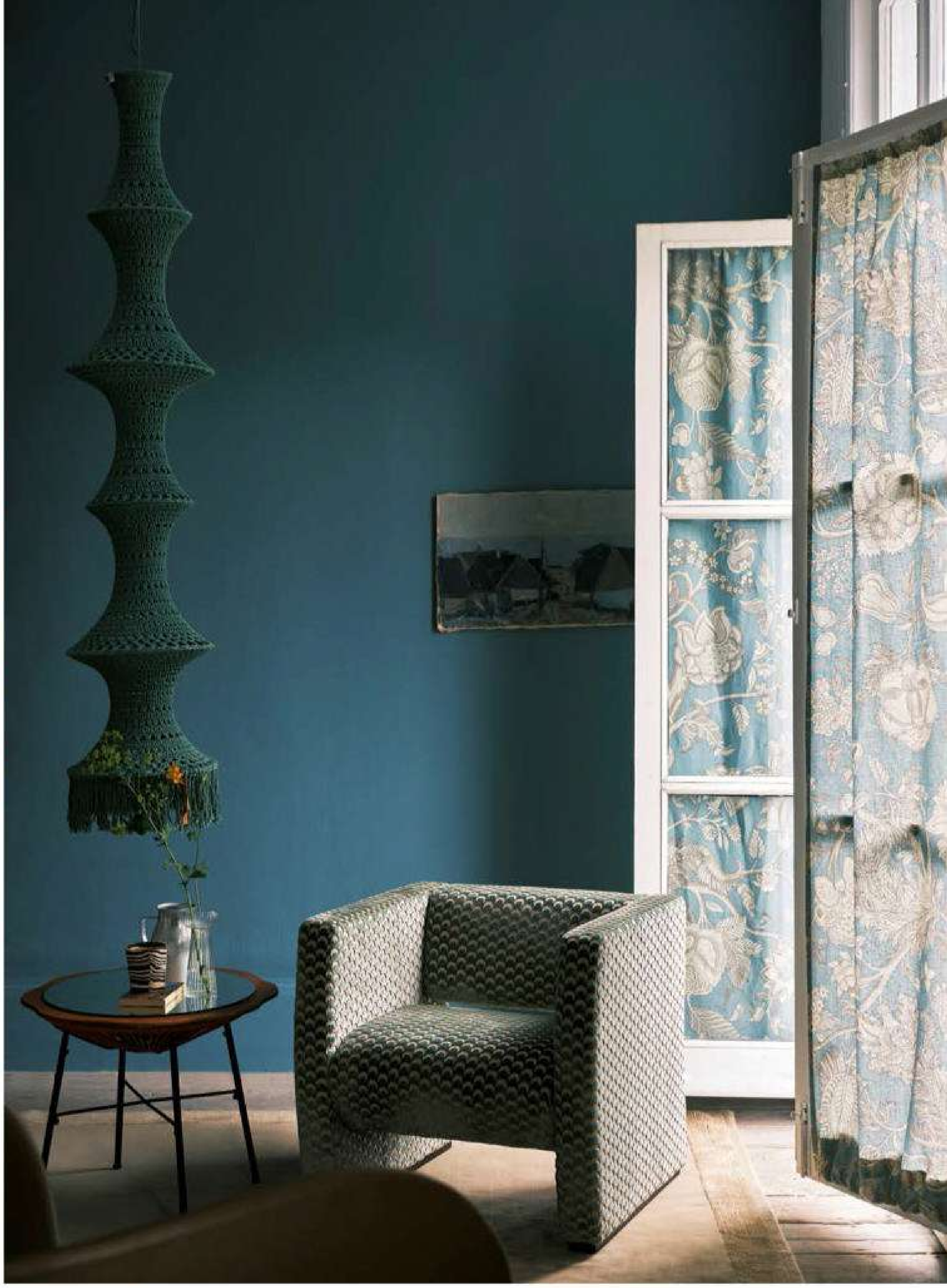
Little says British as much as partaking in a cup of tea come the afternoon (or any time of day, for that matter). Bearing bold patterns featuring monkeys, parrots and leopards, as well as exotic floral and botanical designs, the new Wonderlust teaware collection from heritage makers Wedgwood pays homage to global destinations and adventures experienced on the Grand Tour, from Asia through to Europe.

Wonderlust Teaware, from £33, Wedgwood



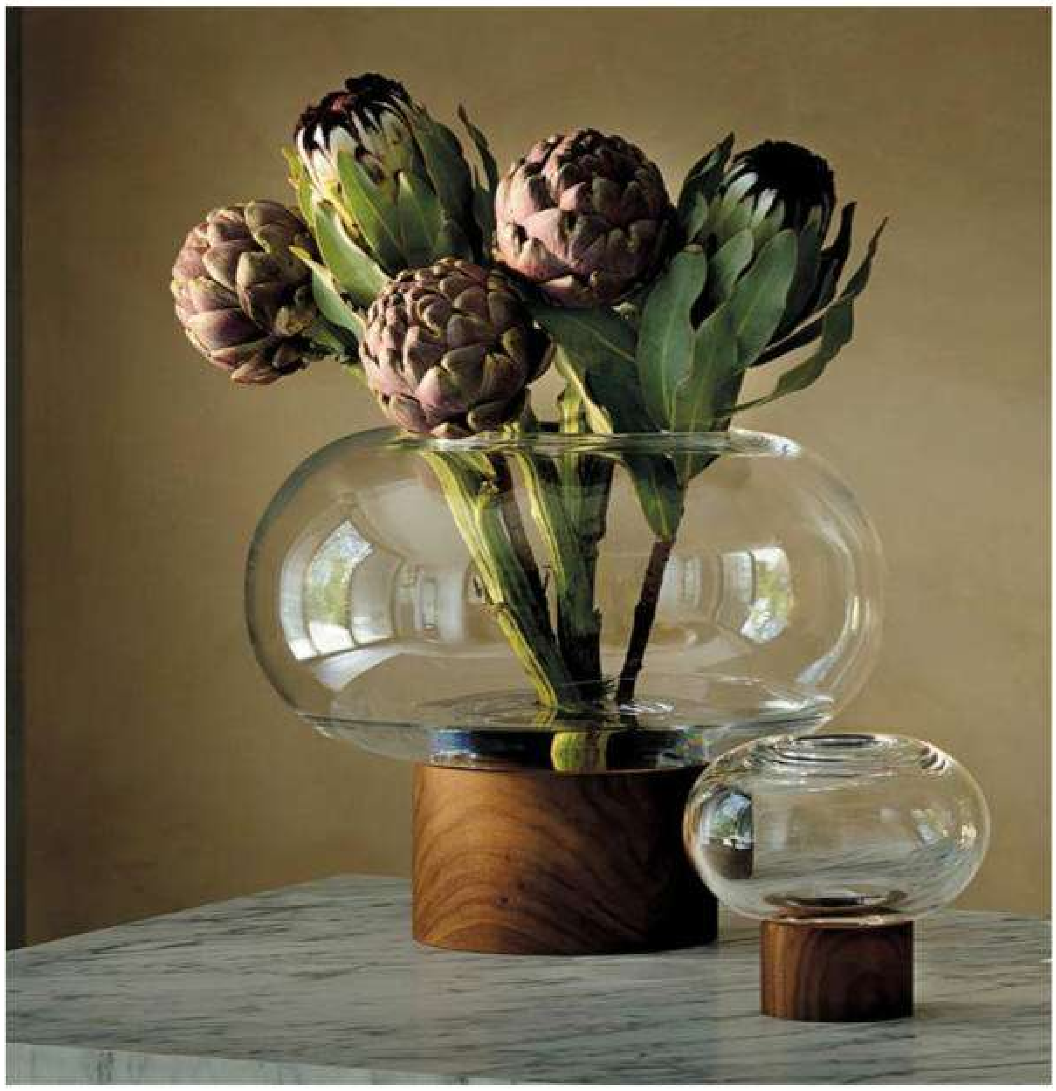
TEXTURE AND COLOUR

Named after the Japanese word used to describe the magical moment of scattered sunlight playing out across the forest floor, the Komorebi rug from A Rum Fellow is one of three new designs available across the Ladrillo collection, created to explore textured shapes and layers of colour.
Komorebi rug, from £1,620 (160 x 230 cm), bespoke from £440 a square metre, A Rum Fellow



PERFECT PAIRING

Featuring 15 shades from the Farrow & Ball Archive collection and complementary interiors fabrics from the Liberty Modern Collector range, this collaboration from two key British brands sees a curated edit designed to form a series of timeless colour and print combinations.
Wall, Berrington Blue, from £53 for 2.5l Modern Emulsion; woodwork, Clunch, from £30 for 0.75l Modern Eggshell; curtains, Palampore Trail, Lichen, £150 a metre, all Farrow & Ball curated by Liberty collection



MIXED MATERIALS

The mouth-blown flattened glass spheres and oiled walnut bases of these Oblate vessels form part of London-based design studio LSA International's new collection comprising drinkware, tableware and interior accessories in a mix of textures and sleek finishes.
Oblate vases from £165; AW21 collection, from £25, all LSA International ▶

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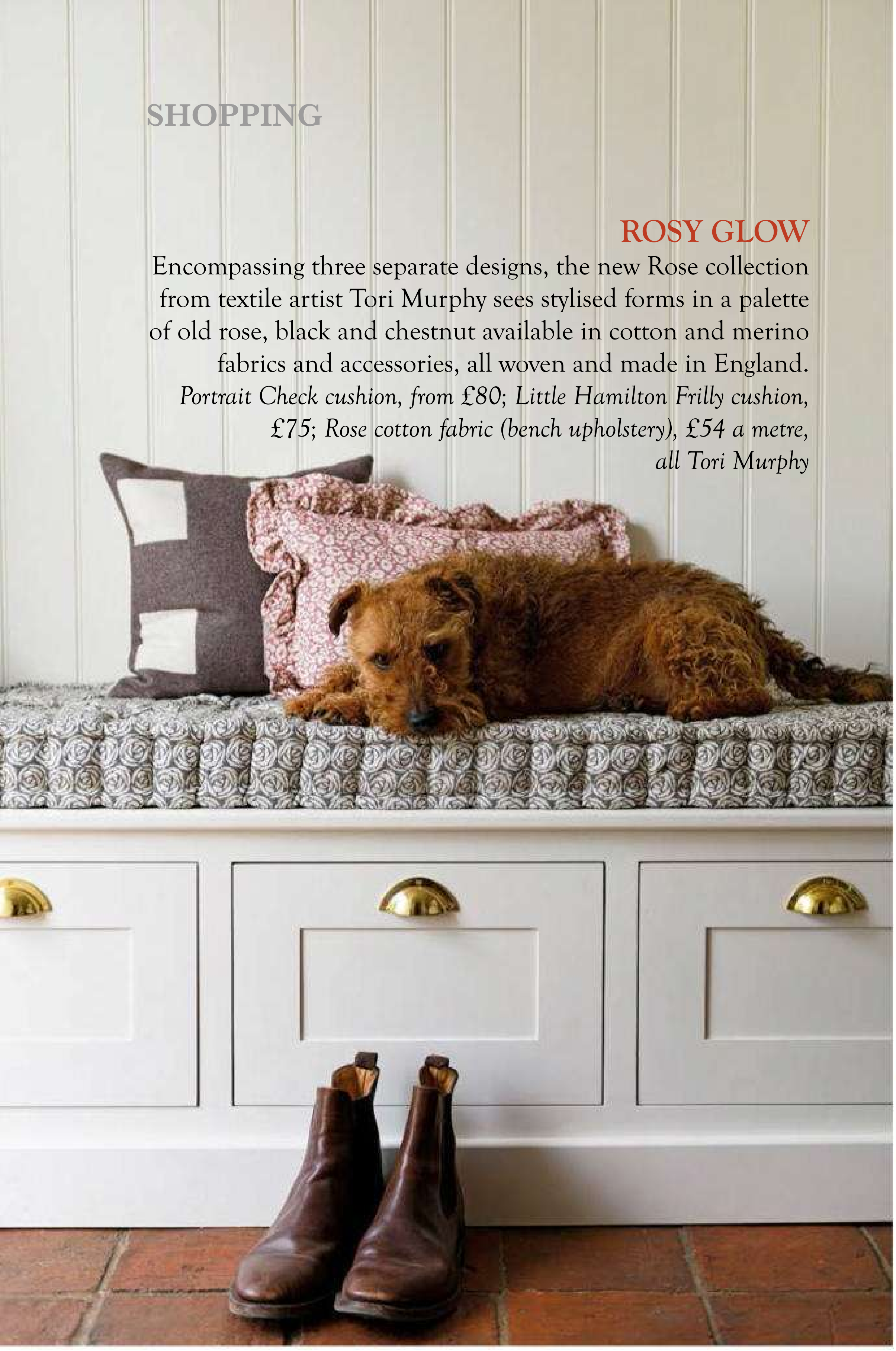
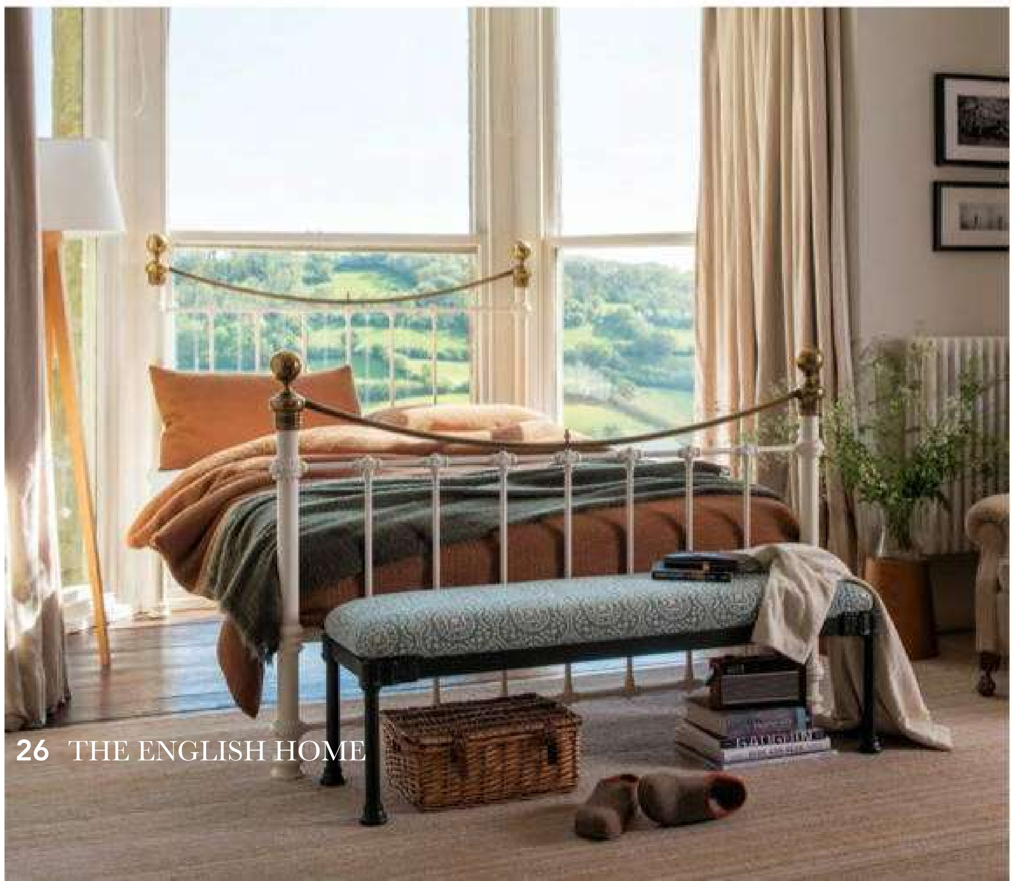


ROSY GLOW

Encompassing three separate designs, the new Rose collection from textile artist Tori Murphy sees stylised forms in a palette of old rose, black and chestnut available in cotton and merino fabrics and accessories, all woven and made in England.
Portrait Check cushion, from £80; Little Hamilton Frilly cushion, £75; Rose cotton fabric (bench upholstery), £54 a metre, all Tori Murphy

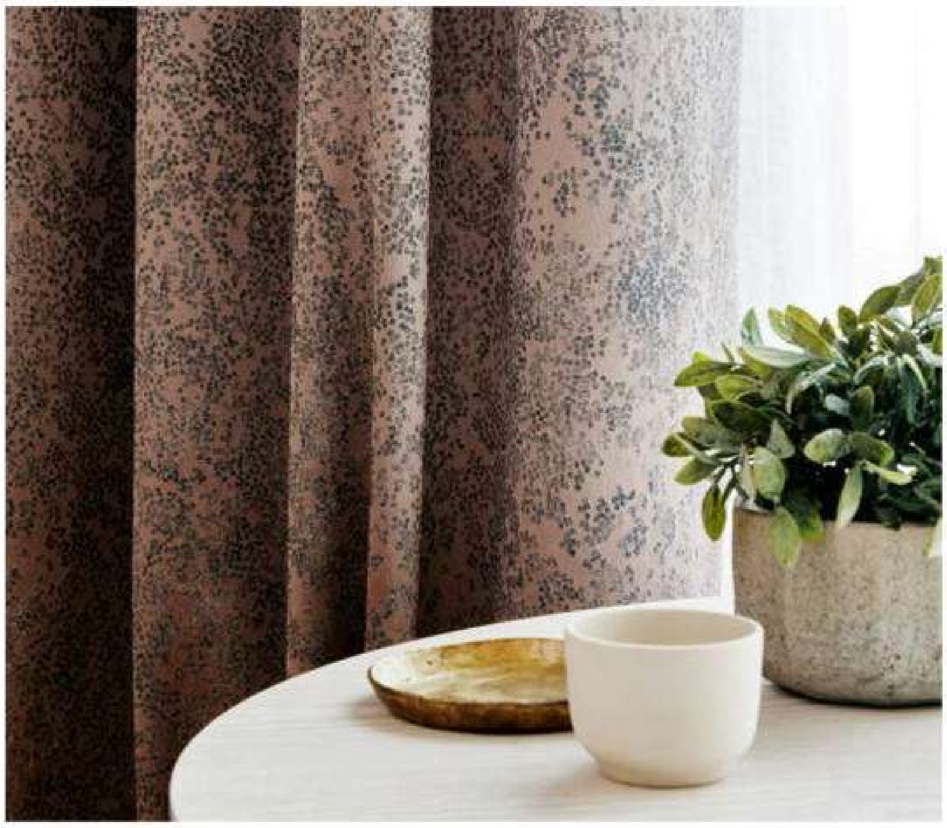
BENCHMARK FOR STYLE

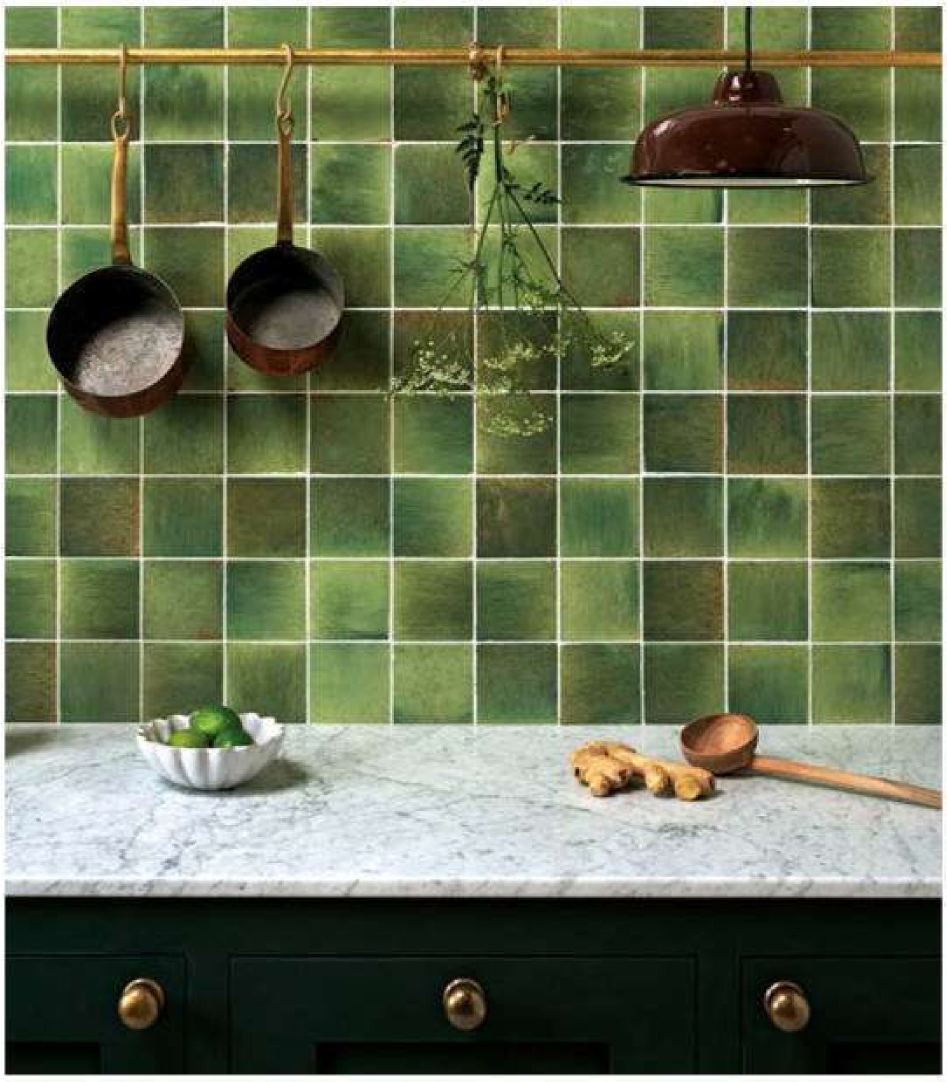
Hand-cast using traditional Victorian techniques, the Fowey bench is the newest piece of furniture added to the classic designs from The Cornish Bed Company, and is available in a range of powder coat paint colours, including four new shades across the brand's entire product range.
Fowey Bench, from £685, The Cornish Bed Company



GLOBAL DESIGN

The jacquard weave of this Nyiri design, available in six colourways, is one of 11 that make up Romo's new Itami drapery collection of decorative weaves and embroideries that bring together influences from across the globe.
Itami Collection, from £84.50 a metre, Romo





ITALIAN TOUCH

Inspired by a ceramics collection uncovered in Italy, the new Pottery range of porcelain tiles from Ca' Pietra embraces strong shading and tonal variations. Available in rectangular or square formats across five colourways, it is suitable for both interiors (walls and floors) and exteriors (walls only).
Pottery Porcelain, Kale Green, from £0.68 a tile, Ca' Pietra ■

FEATURE EVE MIDDLETON **PHOTOGRAPHS** P24 (FARROW & BALL/LIBERTY) © JAMES MERRELL. P26 (TORI MURPHY) ©JACK NEVILLE; (ROMO) © DAMIAN RUSSELL

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Copper occasional table with brass legs, £85, Bombay Duck

Paints: Market Green, Plum Tree and Blueprint, from £27 for 1l, Mylands

Hendrix cabinet, £8,453; Gladys dining table, £4,405; Barbana chair, £1,573, all Arteriors

Lattice table lamp, £282 plus shade, David Hunt Lighting

Chester cabinet, £2,175, Andrew Martin

Burgundy ribbed glass holder, £15.99, Ivyline

DARK & HANDSOME

Set the scene for winter nights with indulgent, rich colours and textures in chic and distinguished designs. Deep tones of navy, burgundy, green and even charcoal are given an opulent feel in velvet and silk. Paint colours could be a cosseting inky, matt finish or given a glossy surface with a finishing coat of lacquer. The addition of metallics lightens the mood whilst enhancing the luxury of the scheme – look to golden threads in embroidery details or passementerie, and gold or brass highlights on dark wood furniture and accessories.

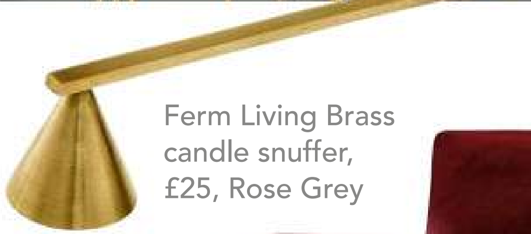
Paradis Rust cushion cover, £22, Walton & Co

Double X bench, from £995, Jonathan Adler

Abstract rug, £3,996 (1.8m x 2.4m), Jennifer Manners

Lavish large gold bowl, £44.95, Beaumonde

Nyala fabric in Serpentine, £199 a metre, Zoffany



Ferm Living Brass candle snuffer, £25, Rose Grey

Reuben three-seat sofa in Claret cotton matt velvet, £1,115, Sofa.com

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN

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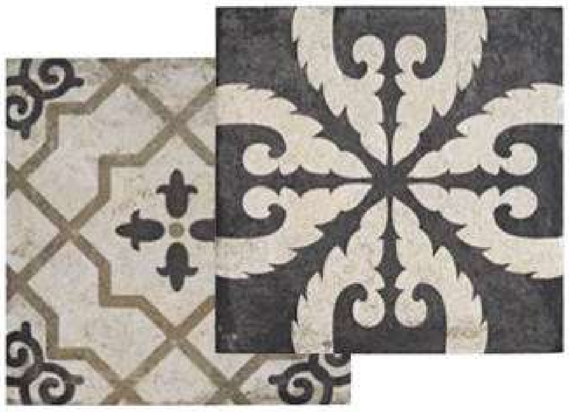
THE RIGHT APPROACH

Create a good first impression with a well-dressed front door and approach to the home. Paint the door in a favourite cheerful colour, or opt for heritage hues or chic greys for period properites. Inject character with a knocker and add interest with plants and patterned tiles. A seasonal wreath will welcome guests and make returning home extra special. Useful additions such as a boot brush, post box and of course a door mat need not be boring – use them to add colour and personality, too. For lighting, look to elegant wall-mounted options or a classic porch lantern.

Door bell cover in Antiqued Brass with Ceramic Bell Push, £49.40, Jim Lawrence

Door in Florida Keys Blue, £24.50 for 0.94l, Benjamin Moore

Mattison porch lantern, Bronze £1,584, Vaughan


Urban Callizo and Urban Velasco tiles, £55 a square metre, Fired Earth

Hare door knocker, Solid Brass, £90, Cox & Cox

Exterior bracket light, Bronze, £395 Davey Lighting

01234
56789

Brass door numbers, £8.95 each; Hexagonal door knocker, £59.95, both Plank Hardware

Art Deco House Number Stained Glass window film, made to measure, Purlfrost

Original post box with lock in Lulworth Blue, £30, Garden Trading

Potted Bay tree, £45, Waitrose

Tilton, Chalk Paint; finish with Chalk Paint Lacquer for exteriors; both £21.95 for 1l, Annie Sloan

Bootjack and boot scraper with handle, £149.95, The Oxford Brush Company

Autumn Wreath, £89, The Real Flower Company

Tree of Life doormat, Extra Large, £28, Red Candy

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN PHOTOGRAPH (VAUGHAN) © A C COOPER

Tom Raffield

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THE EDIT

From bed and table linen to fabric designs and bathroom fittings, Editor-at-Large Kate Freud shares her edit of finishing touches for homes this month

ALICE PALMER & CO

Alice Palmer's bepoke lampshades are so unique, they can be spotted anywhere. What is most striking about them is how it could not have been imagined that someone could be so inventive with something as everyday as a lampshade.

Palmer set about launching her eponymous business after finding a lack of diversity amongst the lampshades available on the market, deciding instead to create her own. Her box-pleated and gathered designs, handmade in London, are inspired by her love of traditional British homes, colonial West Indian villas and Andalusian haciendas. They are soft and pretty, adding colour, texture and pattern in a charming way. Every lampshade is made to order, with Alice either sourcing or designing the fabrics herself, which makes each shade all the more special.
alicepalmer.co

OSBORNE & LITTLE

Never one to rest on its laurels, Osborne & Little has been hard at work producing an extensive collection of new releases this autumn. With escapism the key theme – perhaps because so many of us are still yearning to travel without Covid restrictions – these are designs reminiscent of far off lands and distant shores.

Osborne & Little's inspiration comes from exotic birds, foliage and flora, all designed to bring the outdoors in. The Empyrea collection uses embroidery, print and weave designs in an enchanting colour palette, to create imagined lands and gardens. The Empyrea digitally printed, large-scale mural-design wallpapers are equally beautiful. The Cassiano collection, a classic check, is given a modern twist with a playful palette. Terra Firma is an eco-friendly collection of two semi-plain weaves made from recycled polyester and organic cotton. These dual-purpose fabrics are also stain-resistant and available in 21 shades.
osborneandlittle.com

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karndean.com/living

CABBAGES & ROSES

When Christina Strutt launched Cabbages & Roses in 2000, she wanted to create beautiful things that were practical and useful for everyday living. Today the family-run, independent business, which is based in Somerset, does just that, but on a pretty impressive scale.

Not only is it possible to buy beautiful fashion and fabrics, but also cushions and bedding in the brand's distinctive soft palette and floral designs. New to the collection are tablecloths and napkins, all made from the most beautiful pre-washed linen for that vintage, well-loved feel. Each design is available in Cabbages & Roses' signature prints, like the India Rose and Constance floral designs, both of which come in Pink and French Blue.

cabbagesandroses.com

BEAUMONT & BROWN

Nothing quite compares to the feeling of getting into a bed that has been freshly made with sumptuous cotton bedlinen. Something which luxury linen brand Beaumont & Brown is fully aware of.

The company was founded by friends Robin Beaumont and Norman Brown in 2005 to supply five-star hotels (including the Fairmont group, Forte hotels, Limewood and the Hyatt group) with bedding and towels. Soon however, the duo realised that they could offer people at home the same quality linen, without the middle man.

Fast forward to today, and Beaumont & Brown sells everything from travel bedding to bath robes, pillows to duvets, towels to cushions, and of course its signature bedding made using extremely soft, silky, 400 thread count cotton with beautiful cording in different shades, from grey to aqua, to go with any interiors scheme.

beaumontandbrown.com

WATERWORKS

When Barbara and Robert Sallick founded their bath and kitchen company, Waterworks, in the US in 1978, it was the start of a business that has grown to be globally recognised for its impeccable style and artisan quality.

Today the company is run by their son, Peter, who is the creative director and opened Waterworks' first UK showroom, on the King's Road in London, in April 2014. Here it is possible to see the company's large range, including taps, baths, tiles, lighting, towels and more.

This season sees the launch of the Highgate collection, created in collaboration with design studio ASH NYC. Classic styles are reimagined with porcelain handles rendered in four fresh shades of vibrant cerise, azure blue, citron yellow and jade green, to create an eye-catching statement in a bathroom.

waterworks.com ■

PHOTOGRAPHS (WATERWORKS) © SLOAN HOWARD

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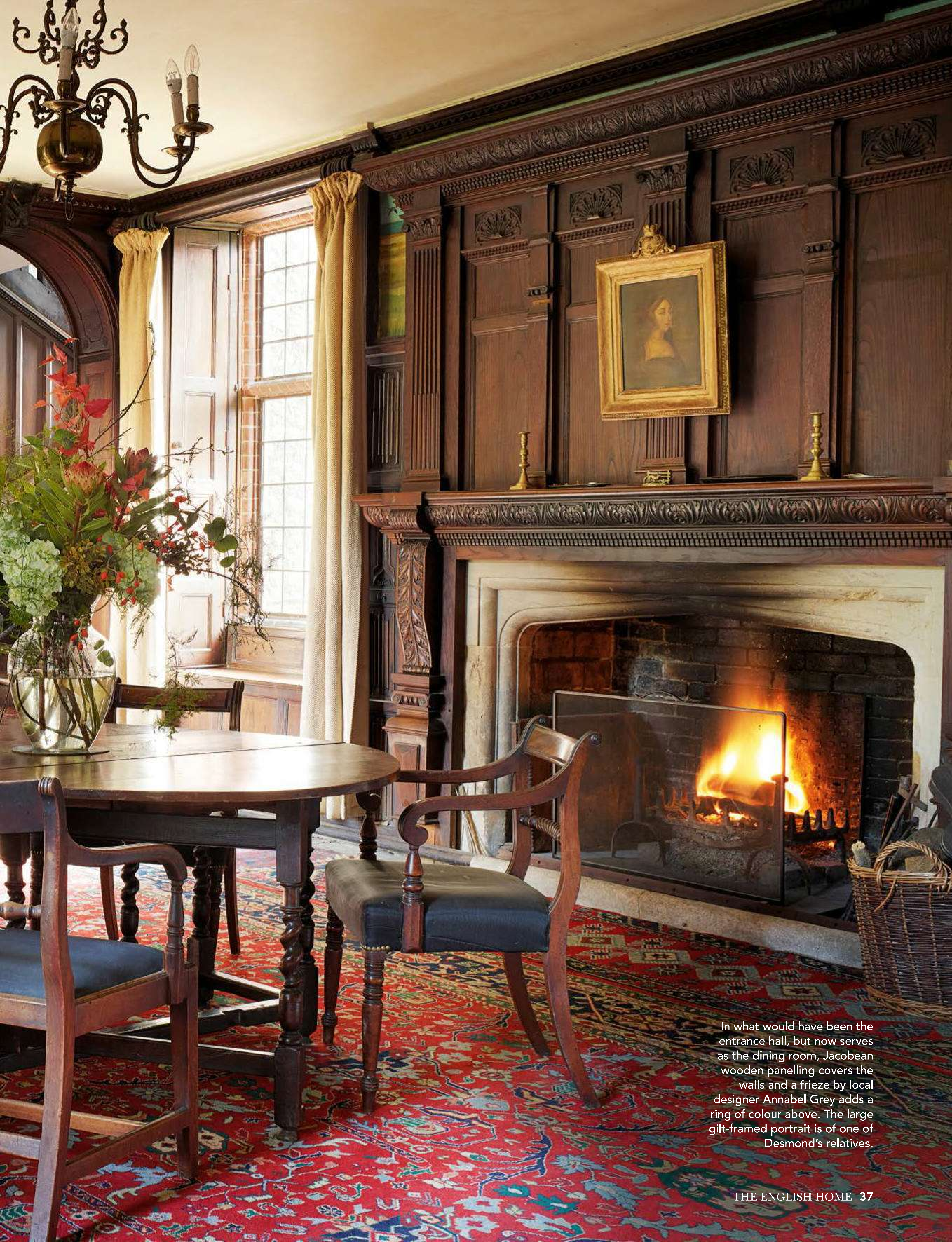
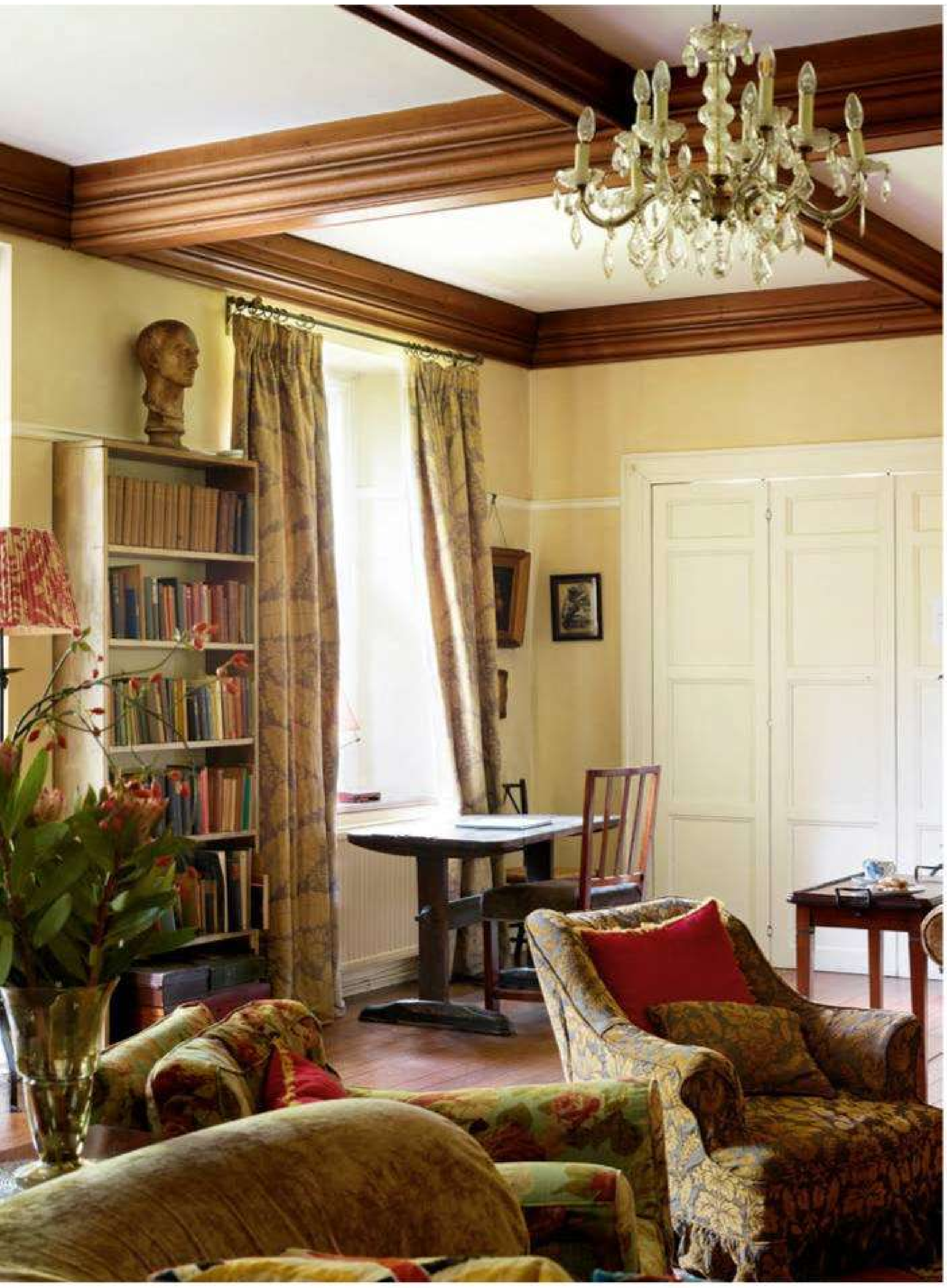
Steeped IN HISTORY

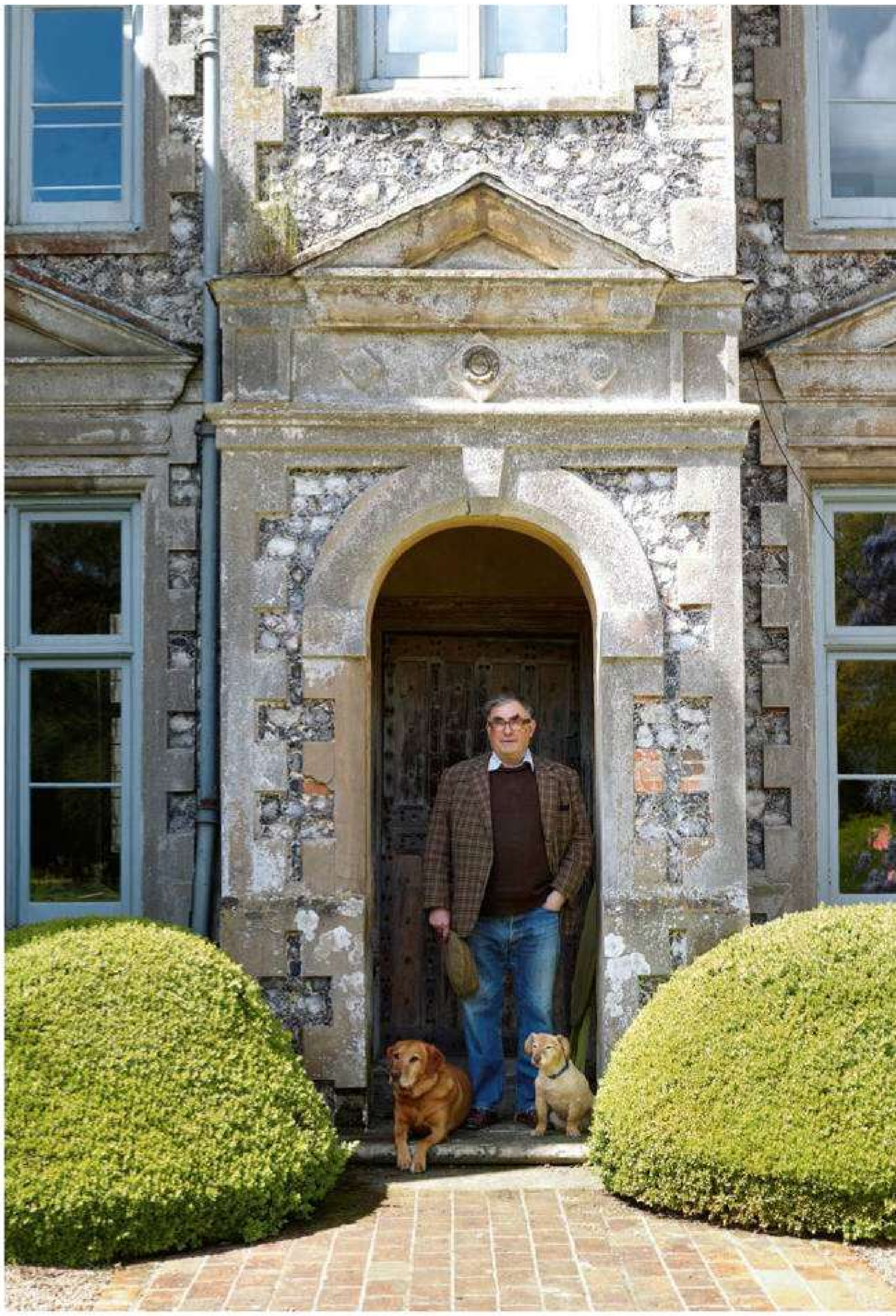
Historic Wiveton Hall has been in the same family for three generations and current owner Desmond MacCarthy is devoted to preserving it for many more years to come

FEATURE ANNA TOBIN PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH
STYLING ANNA TOBIN AND FIONA DE LYS



In what would have been the entrance hall, but now serves as the dining room, Jacobean wooden panelling covers the walls and a frieze by local designer Annabel Grey adds a ring of colour above. The large gilt-framed portrait is of one of Desmond's relatives.





'My mother grew up here, and when she married, she and my father moved into the West Wing. That's where I spent my childhood'

ABOVE The painted panelled doors in the drawing room open up into the kitchen and morning room, which were once the billiard room.

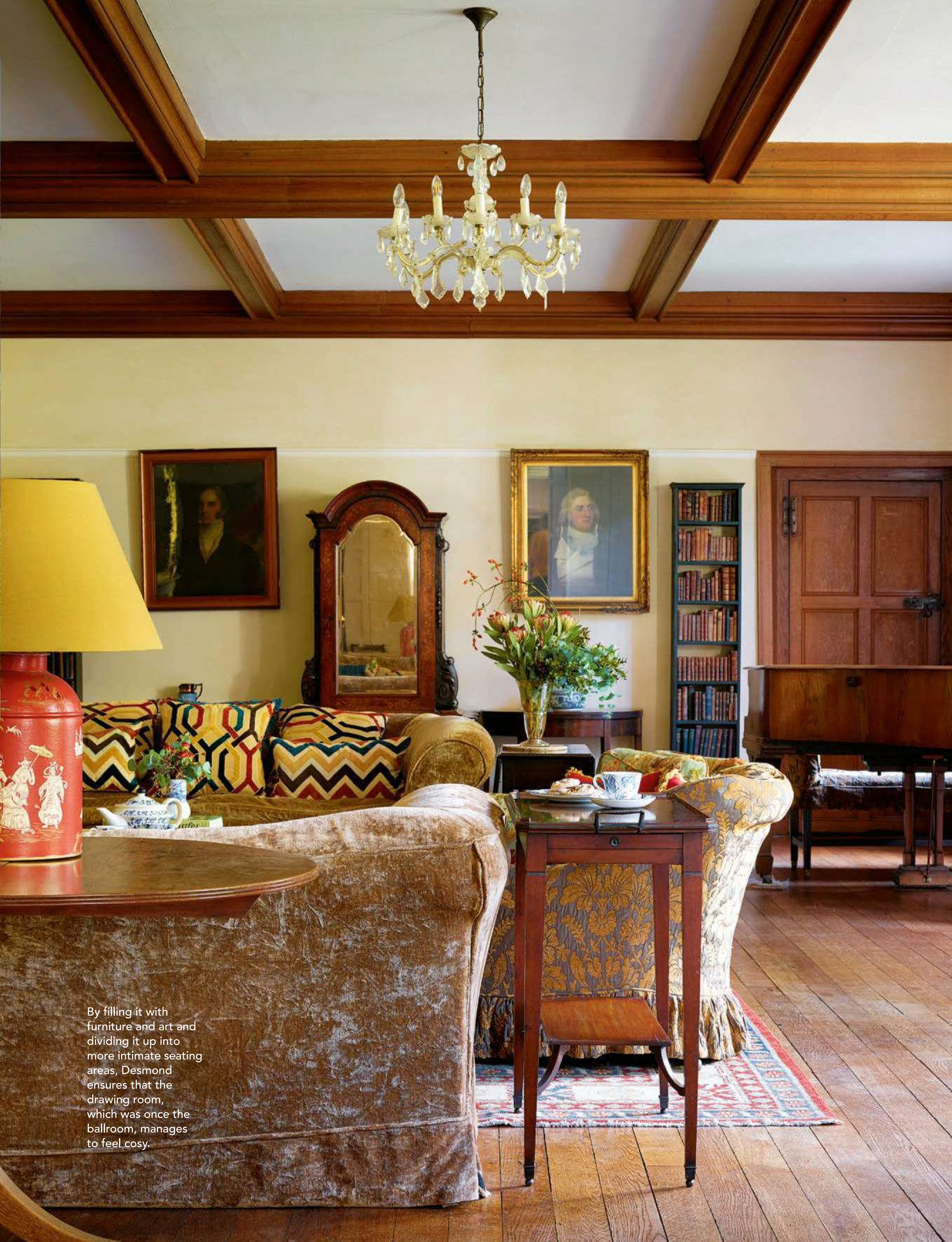
ABOVE RIGHT Desmond with Rowley and Teddy, the family dogs.

Carved into the front door of Grade II* listed Wiveton Hall in Norfolk is the date 1652, revealing to visitors the remarkable age of the oldest part of the Dutch-gabled, flint-faced property. The house was originally built by a merchant, John Gifford, who traded between the Norfolk coast and The Netherlands – explaining the Dutch influence in its architecture. Perhaps its most notable inhabitant has been Herbert Ward, famous for having accompanied Sir Henry Morton Stanley on his expeditions to Africa in the late nineteenth century.

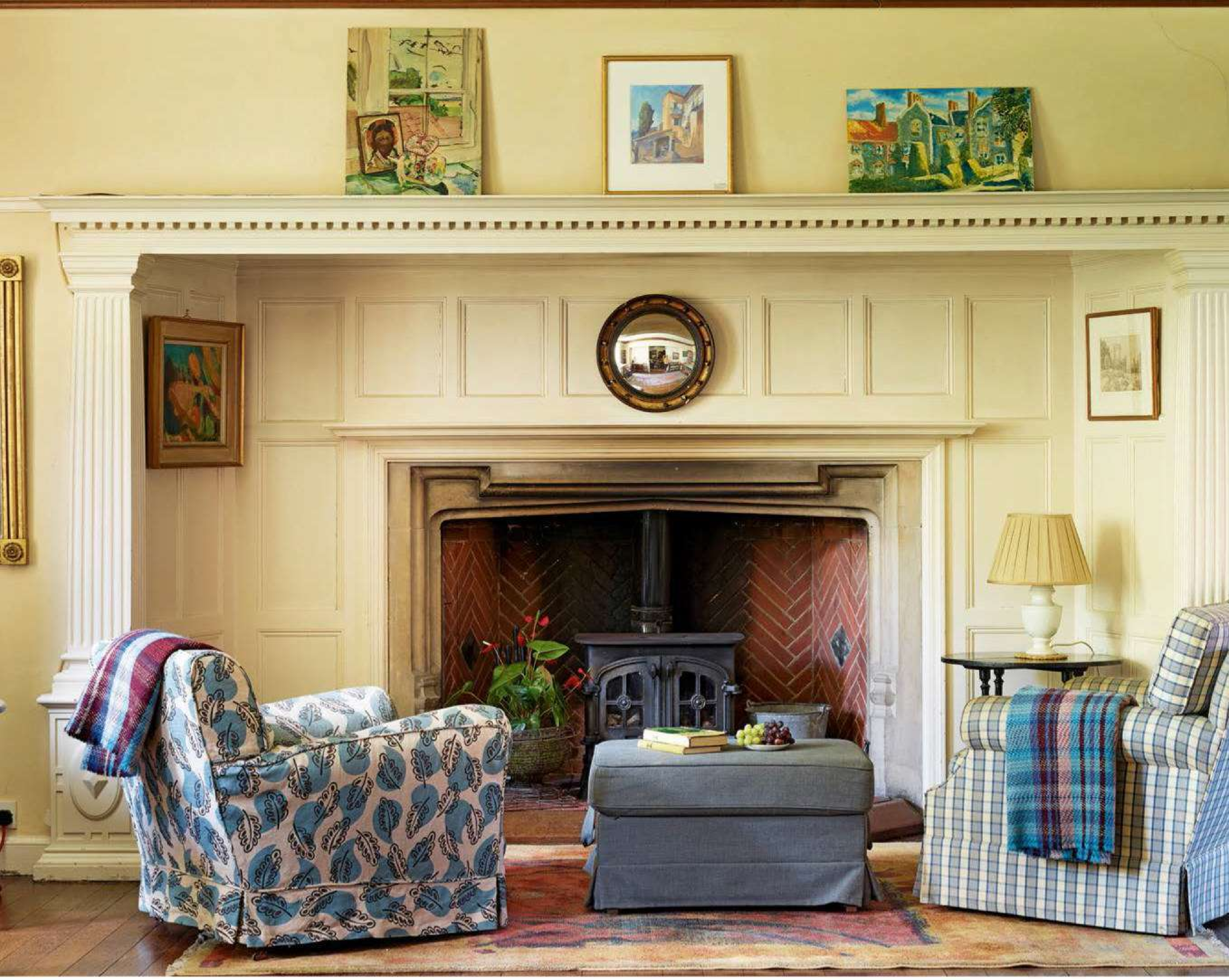
Current owner, Desmond MacCarthy, has lived in the house, which looks out over the salt marshes to the North Norfolk coast, all his life. "My grandparents bought the house and the surrounding farmland in 1944," he explains. "My mother grew up here, and when she married, she and my father moved into the West Wing, which was added by the architect Sir Guy Dawber in 1907. That's where I spent my childhood." Desmond took possession of the whole house when he started a family. He also took over the running of the farm and found that keeping the house and surrounding land in good profitable shape was more than a full-time job.

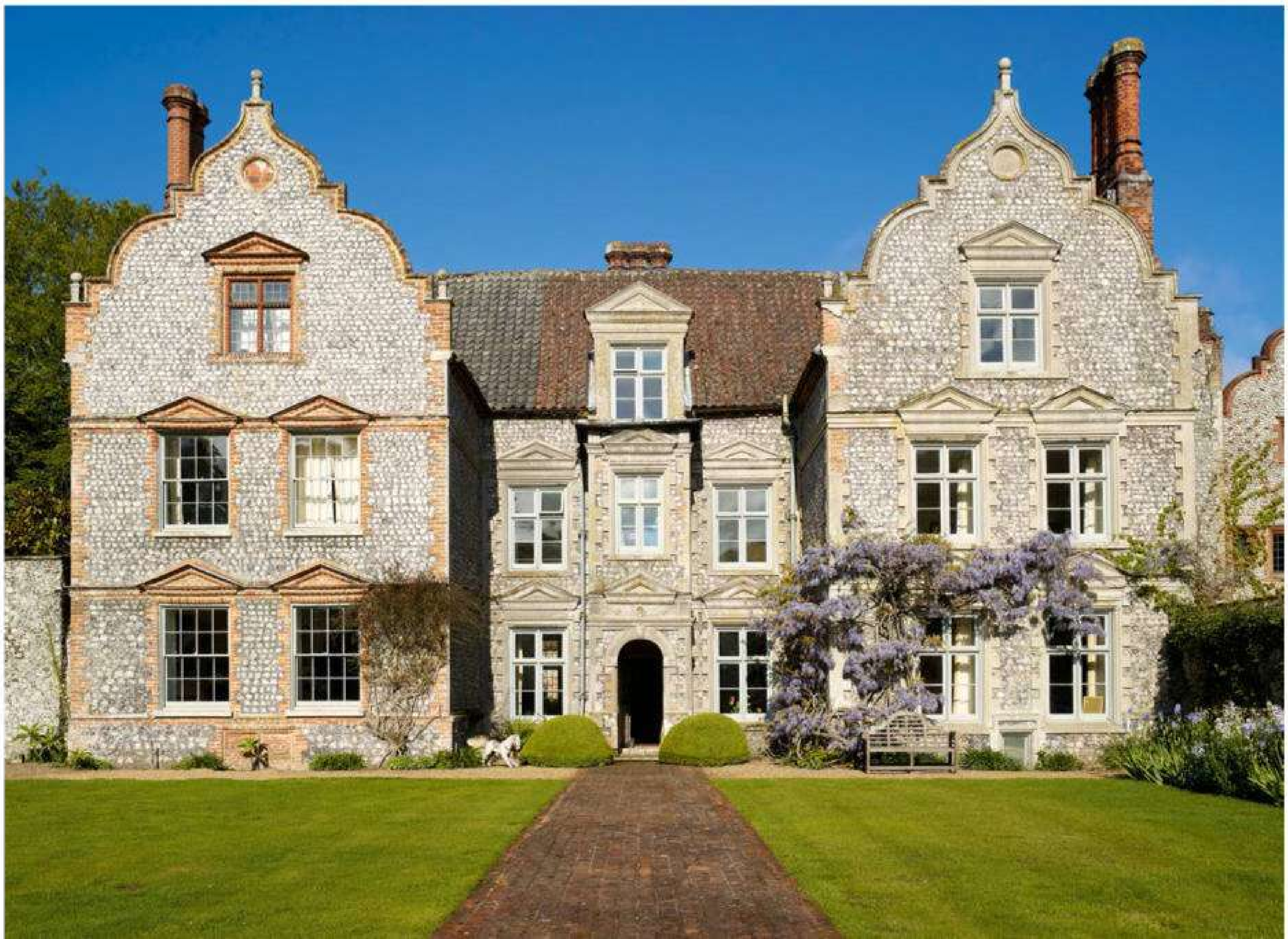
To the visitor, the house and its gardens presents an idyllic picture of rural bliss. Inside, a beautiful combination of interesting furniture, artwork, books and artefacts that Desmond has inherited or collected over the decades is set against a backdrop of beautiful architectural features. Surrounding the Jacobean-style manor house is a glorious patchwork of gardens and farmland, roamed by Wiveton's resident flocks of guinea fowl and hens, along with gun dog Rowley and his little sidekick Teddy.

"Keeping Wiveton Hall in good condition is a challenge," says Desmond. "We did used to get grants ▶

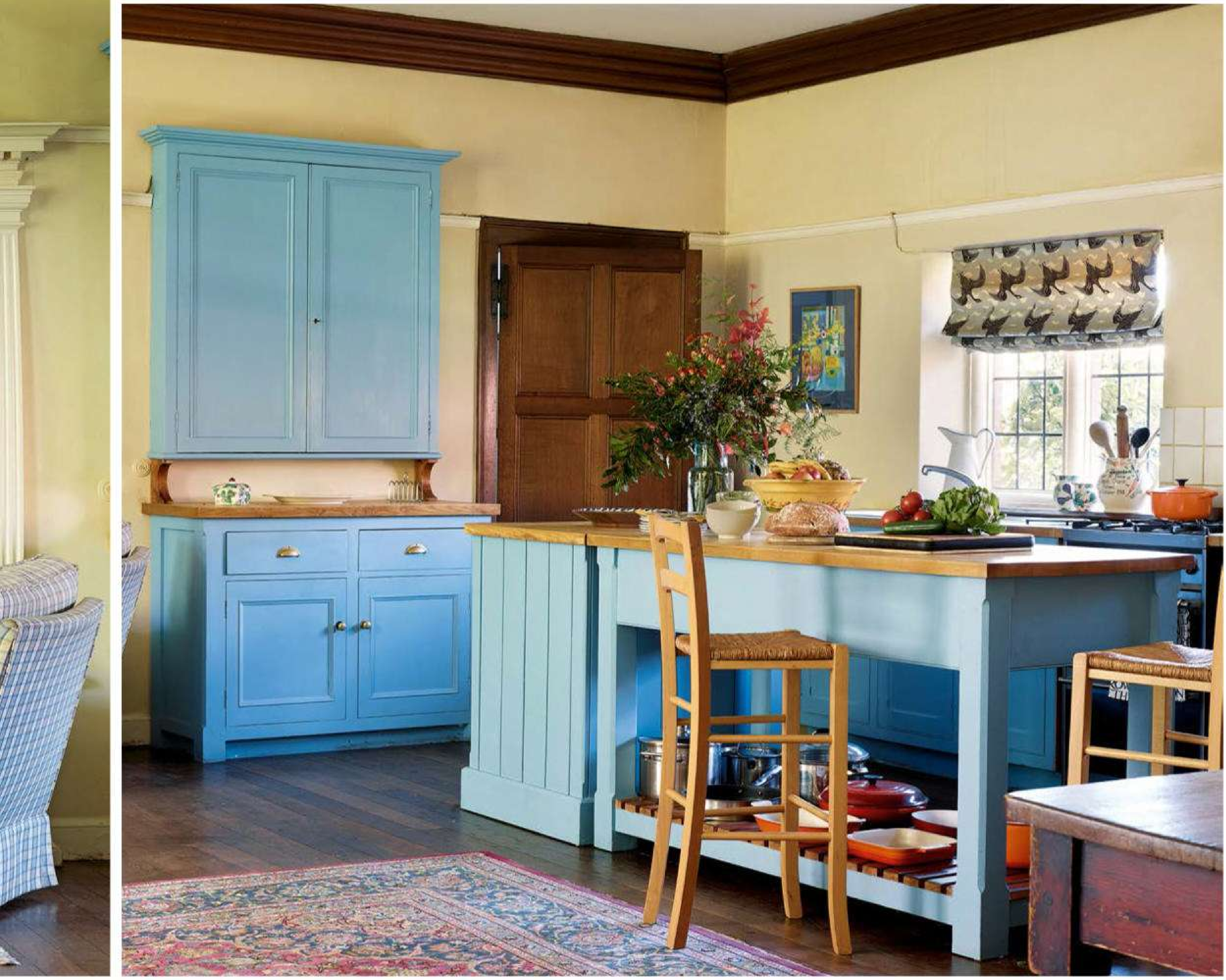


By filling it with furniture and art and dividing it up into more intimate seating areas, Desmond ensures that the drawing room, which was once the ballroom, manages to feel cosy.





ABOVE The West Wing was added in 1907 and this room was then the billiards room, but is now the kitchen and morning room. RIGHT Surrounded by quintessentially English gardens, Wiveton Hall is a mix of decorative Jacobean and Dutch renaissance architecture. To visit the gardens, cafe or shop at Wiveton Hall or book a stay in the West Wing or the cottages in its grounds, visit *wiveton-hall.co.uk*



> *'It's never-ending, but I do get a lot of pleasure from keeping the house and gardens in great shape'*

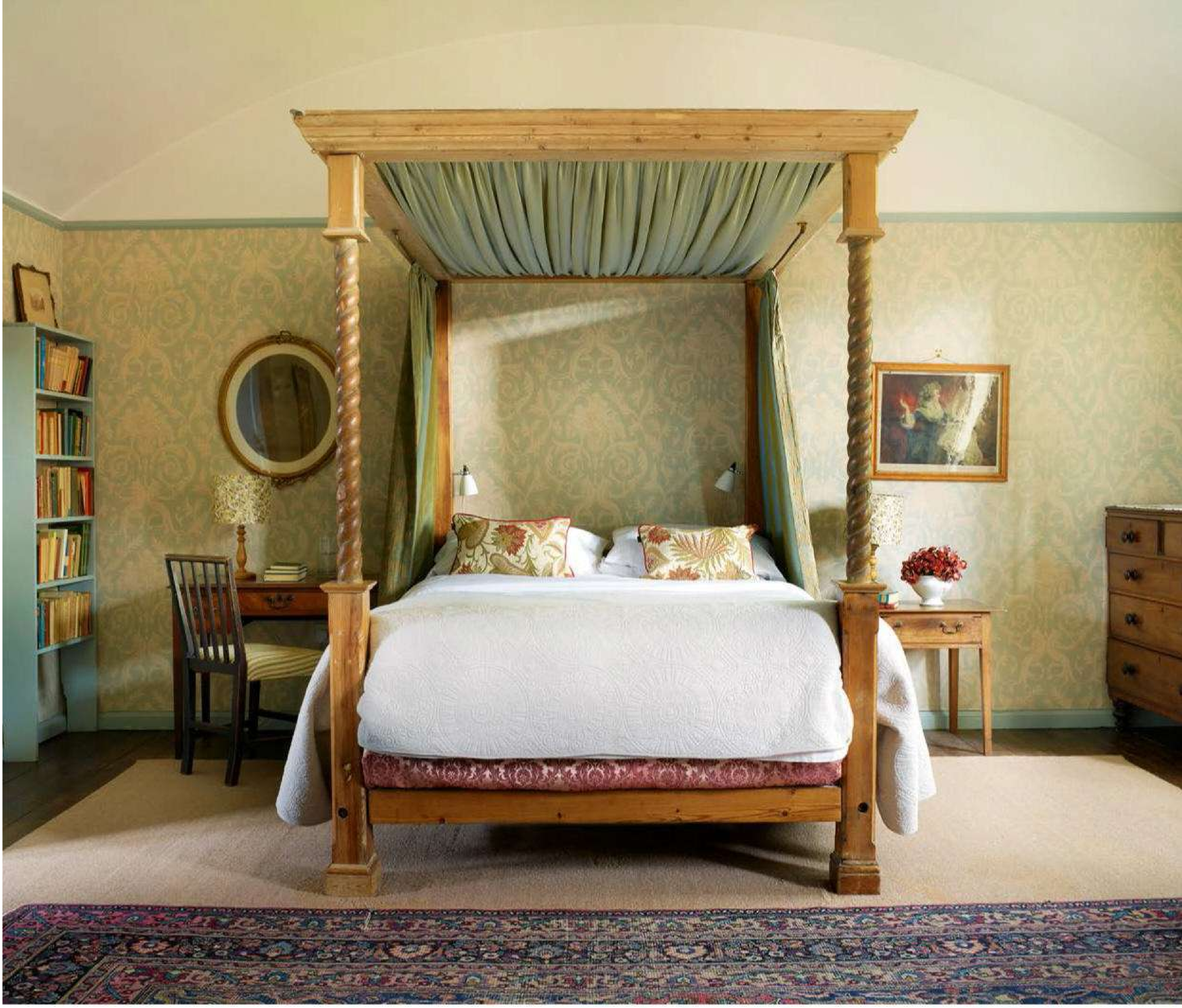
to help cover some of the conservation work, but it's very hard to get them now. When you're living and working in a very old house, you never get to the end of the maintenance list; there is always something that needs attention. Right now it's the windows that need repainting. They're all going to be done in a natural linseed oil-based paint, because it easily adapts to the structure of the wood, letting it breathe. It's never-ending, but I do get a lot of pleasure from keeping the house and the gardens in great shape."

Desmond still farms the land and, to help with the running costs of the house, has also added a cafe and a shop, whilst the cottages that used to house farm workers have now been turned into holidays lets. The Edwardian-era West Wing, where Desmond and his sister Mary were brought up, is also available as a self-contained holiday let.

The house and the cottages have been cleverly designed with help from local interior and fabric designer Annabel Grey so that they all feel as one. Walls are covered in delicately patterned wallpapers and brightly coloured paints. Windows are draped in soft, floral, draught-excluding fabrics and floors are hidden by a patchwork of traditional rugs, with Desmond's extensive art and antique collection bringing everything all together.

As he wanders through the rooms, it is obvious how much joy Desmond gets from explaining the origins of each painting and antique. In the Jacobean panelled dining room, which is ringed by a colourful frieze of ▶

ABOVE There is plenty of room to cook for a crowd in the colourful kitchen. The units were made by a local carpenter and the kitchen worktops were fashioned from an ash tree that was felled in the grounds of Wiveton. Flowers here and elsewhere in the house by Fiona de Lys.



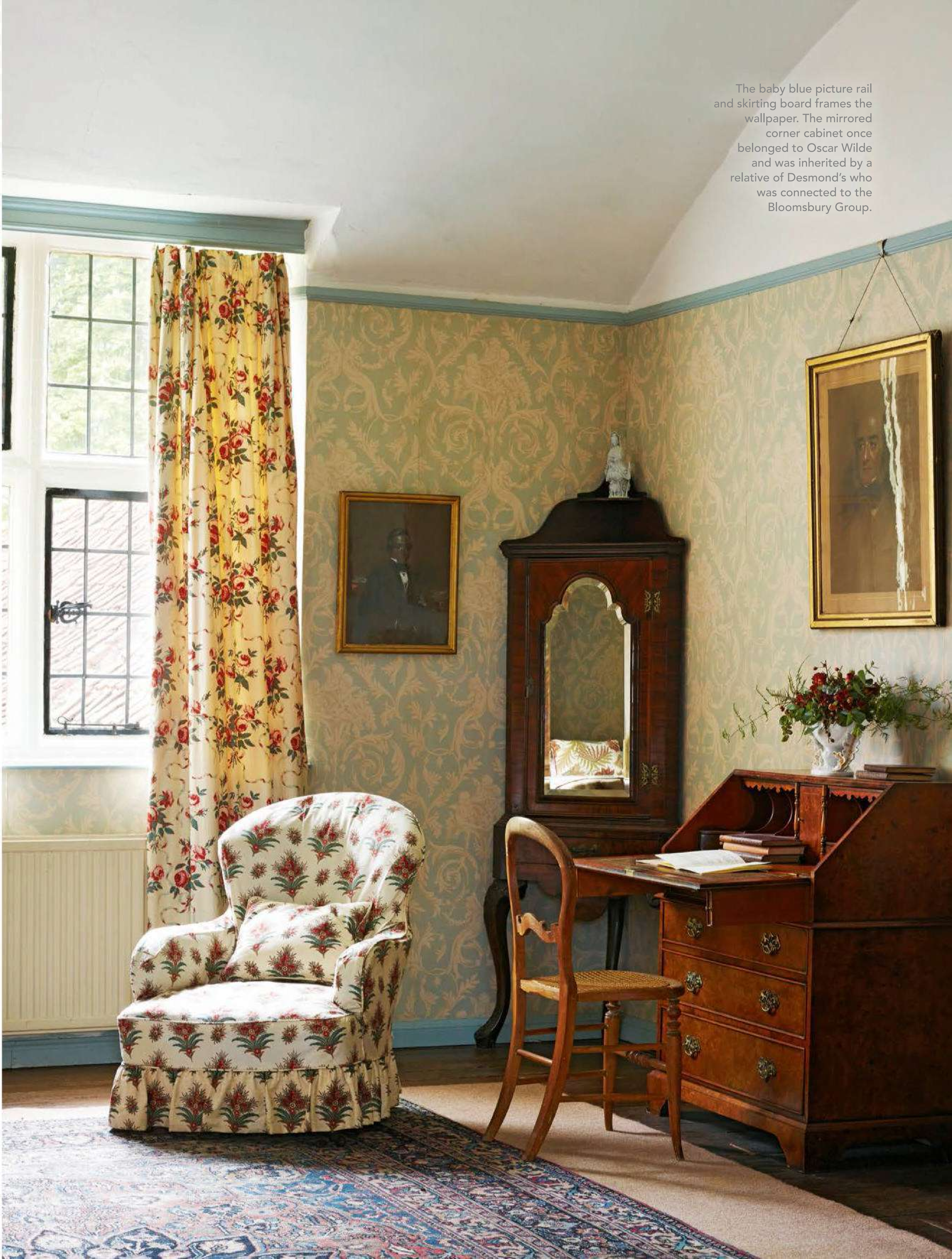
ABOVE The antique four-poster bed sitting under the barrel-vaulted ceiling is the focal point in the master bedroom. The bedside lamp shades are by Ruby Charlotte and the silver birch carafe and glass tumbler are by Emma Britton. The cushions are made from Etienne Cinnabar fabric from Iliv's Silk Road collection.

RIGHT The arched detail on the dressing-table mirror echoes the barrel-vaulted ceiling above. While the floor-length curtains emphasise the room's height.

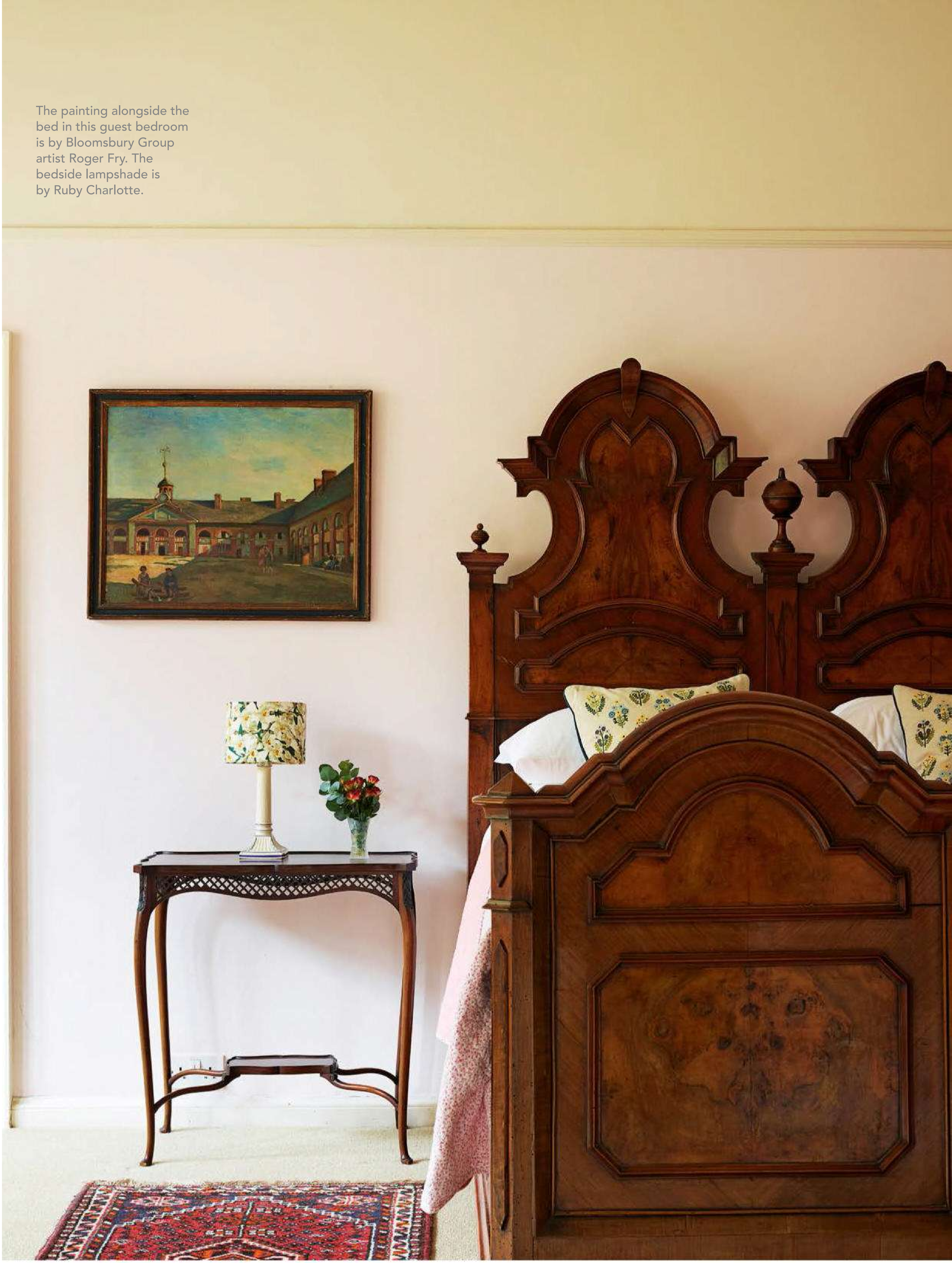
wading birds painted by Annabel Grey, Desmond points at the Regency sofa and says: "My father bought that for seven pounds at a farm auction. When he got it home he scraped off the paint and discovered the original gilt underneath, and then refurbished it. There is probably a pair to it somewhere!"

Walking through into the large formal drawing room, Desmond explains that in the house's Edwardian heyday this room was the ballroom. "We've got an old floorplan of the house hanging in one of the rooms, which explains what each room was designed for," he says. "This was the ballroom, where all the shooting parties would end up. It's still a lovely room for parties and opens up into what was the billiard room, now the kitchen." He nods at a bust on a bookshelf and mentions that it is by the sculptor Kathleen Scott, who also happened to be married to the explorer Scott of the Antarctic.

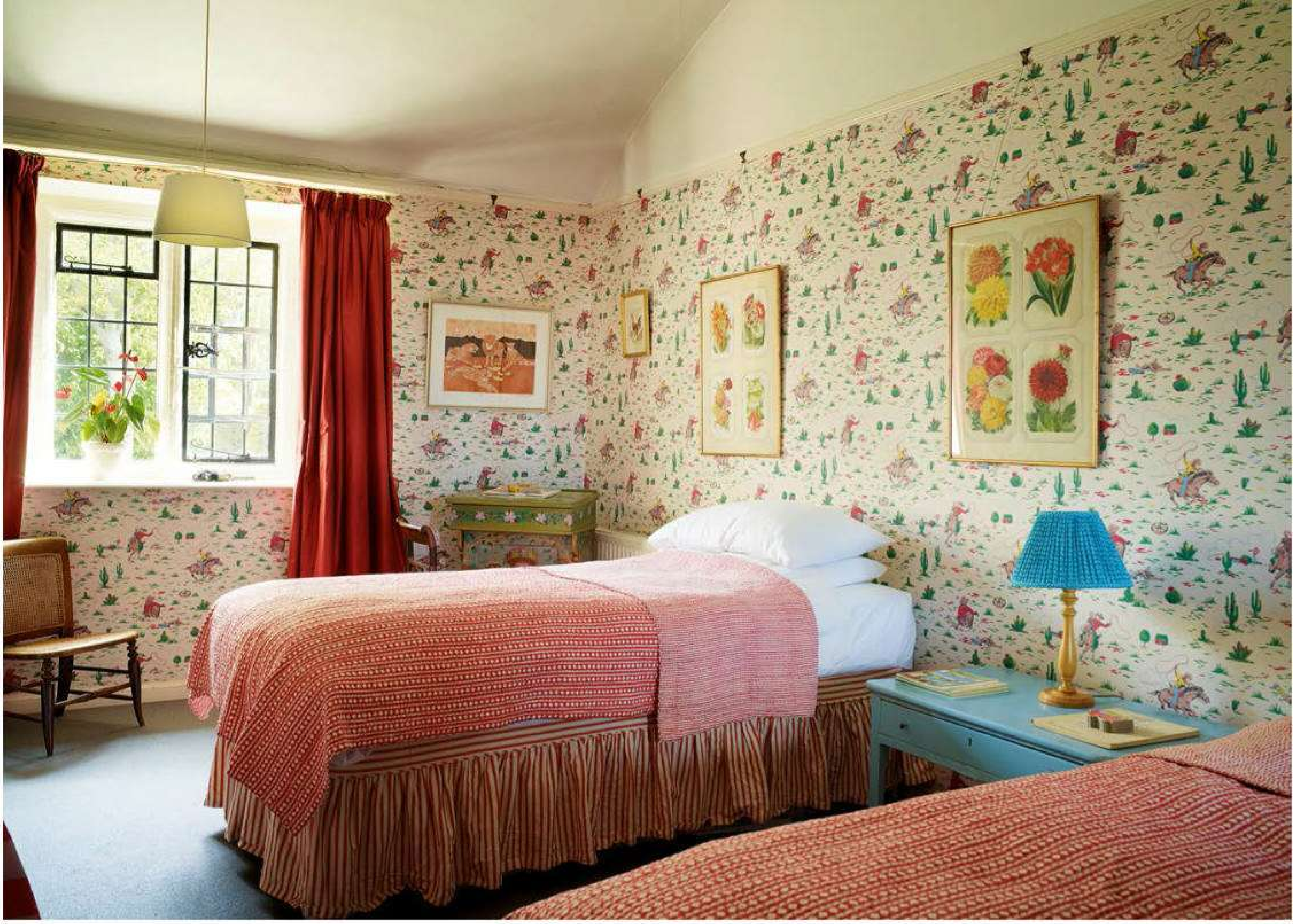
"On the other side of the house, there is a series of smaller rooms, one was for boots and sharpening knives, and there was even a pastry store," reveals ▶



The baby blue picture rail and skirting board frames the wallpaper. The mirrored corner cabinet once belonged to Oscar Wilde and was inherited by a relative of Desmond's who was connected to the Bloomsbury Group.



The painting alongside the bed in this guest bedroom is by Bloomsbury Group artist Roger Fry. The bedside lampshade is by Ruby Charlotte.

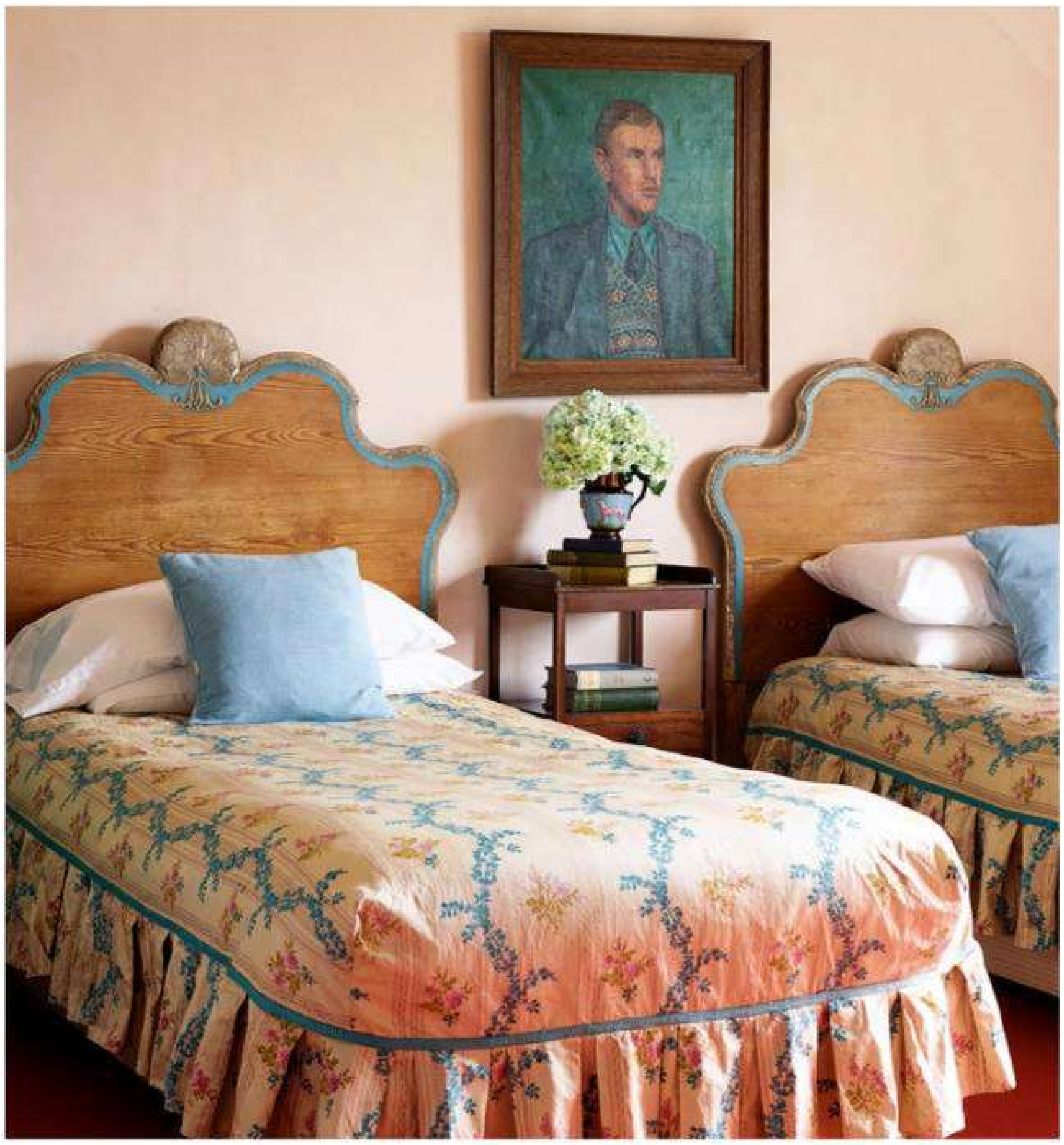


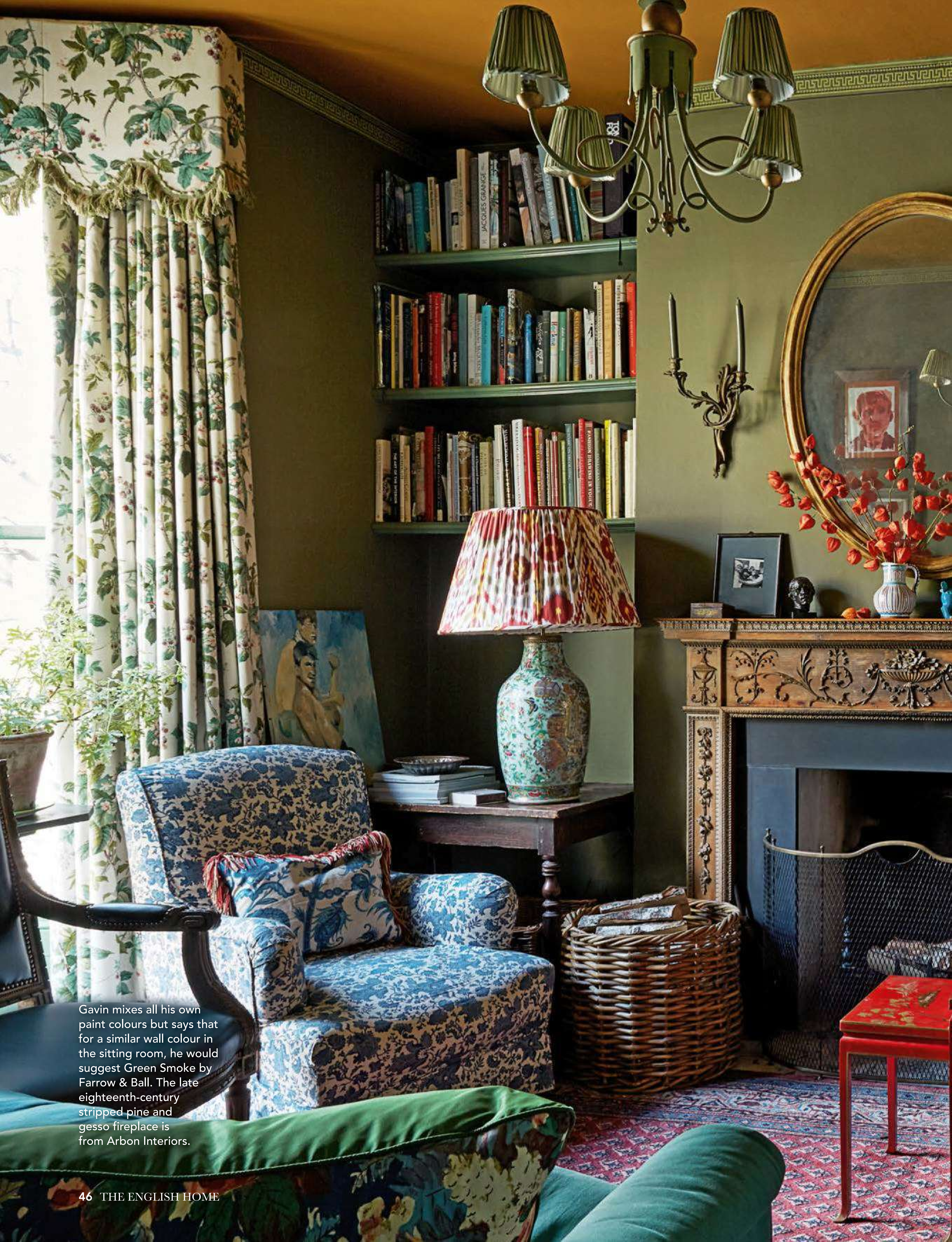
'I want this place to remain as a family home and I've worked hard to keep it that way'

Desmond. The estate continues to live on in the house too, with the kitchen worktops crafted from an ash tree grown in the grounds. Local wood is most likely the source of the three beautifully carved staircases that take you to the upper floors too. Here, antique bedsteads and four-poster beds are the focal point of most of the bedrooms, each of which look out over the beautifully maintained gardens.

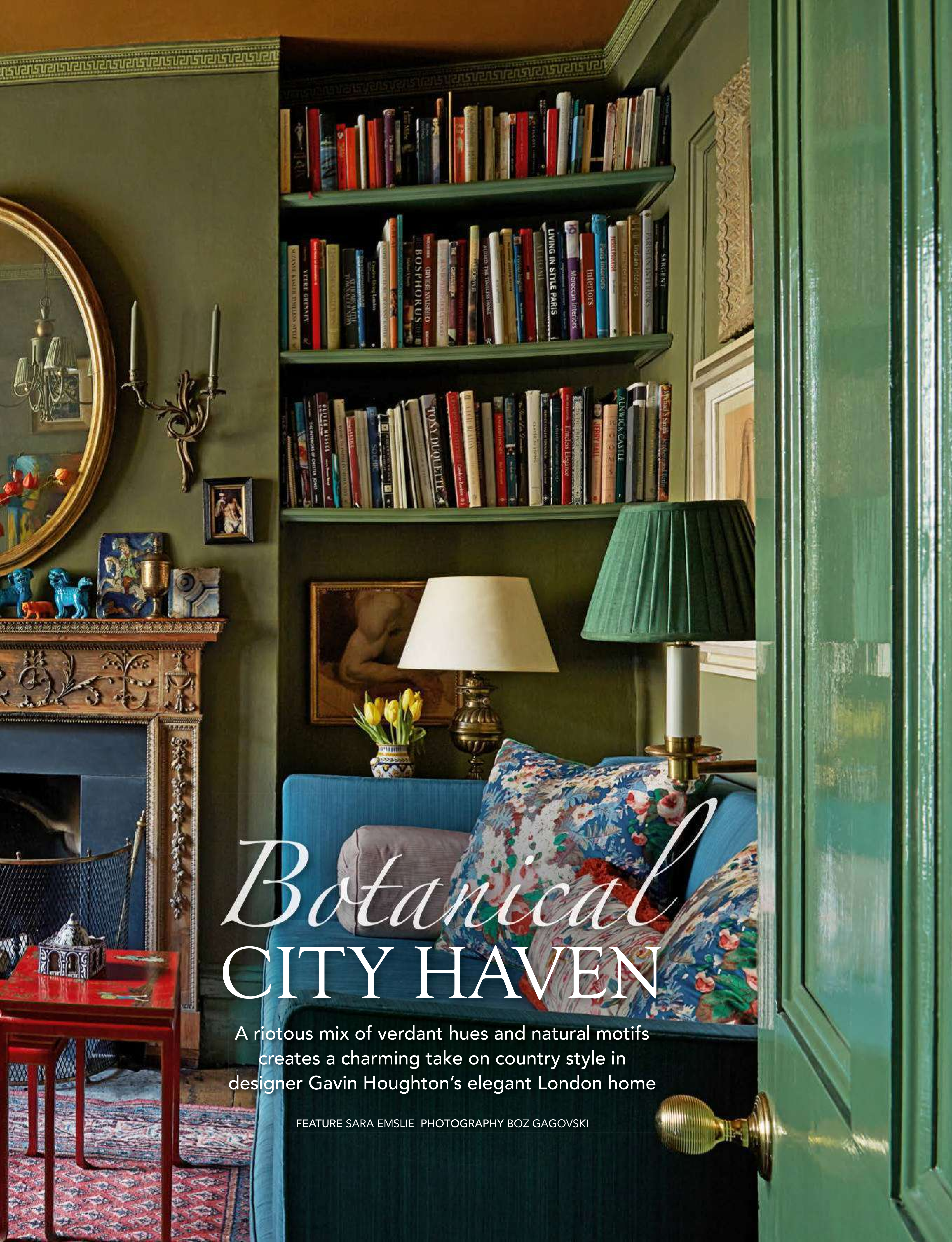
The interior and exterior of Wiveton Hall may feel very familiar to many because it was the setting for the BBC reality series *Normal for Norfolk,* of which Desmond was the star. "I did the TV show really to inform people who have an urban perspective of life about the pleasures of country living. I wanted to show how important it is to protect rural life and how hard it is to run a country estate and farm. Some people would turn this place into a hotel or a well-being centre, but I want it to remain as a family home and I've worked hard to keep it that way." ■

ABOVE A vintage-style cowboy wallpaper by Cath Kidston gives this children's bedroom a timeless welcoming feel. The green desk in the corner was created by painter and author John Verney and includes views of King's Lynn.
RIGHT Two matching vintage fitted bedspreads from Fiona de Lys Floristry and Antiques complement the Austrian headboards in this guest bedroom. The painting is a family portrait from the 1920s.





Gavin mixes all his own paint colours but says that for a similar wall colour in the sitting room, he would suggest Green Smoke by Farrow & Ball. The late eighteenth-century stripped pine and gesso fireplace is from Arbon Interiors.



Botanical CITY HAVEN

A riotous mix of verdant hues and natural motifs creates a charming take on country style in designer Gavin Houghton's elegant London home

FEATURE SARA EMSLIE PHOTOGRAPHY BOZ GAGOVSKI

ABOVE The delightful garden boasts as many different shades of green as the house and is a welcoming place to relax and entertain when the weather allows.
ABOVE RIGHT Gavin sits in front of the marble fireplace he sourced online. It is paired with Delft tiles which were handmade by ceramic artist Douglas Watson. Visit *gavinhoughton.co.uk* to see more of Gavin's design work.

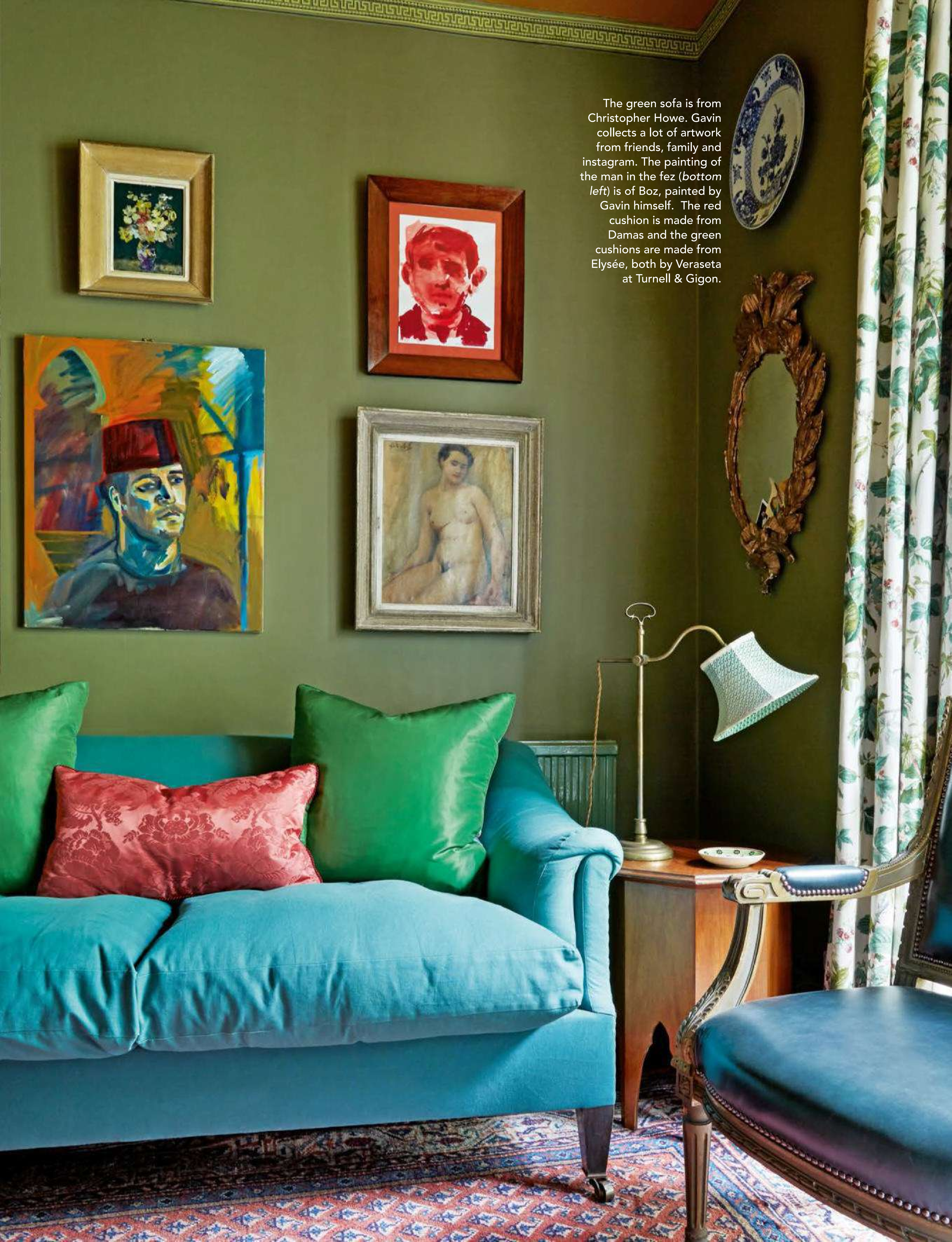
Every creative person has a favourite colour. For interior designer Gavin Houghton it has to be green. From the seductive tones of teal and turquoise to muted olive and khaki, green in all its glory is his go-to for paint, paper and even pattern. It comes as no surprise, then, that the home in Stockwell, London, that now he shares with partner Boz Gagovski, has more than just a couple of leafy tones. "I love green, but it has to be the right shade. Coincidentally, when I came to view the house, one of the occupants was a painter and had painted the sitting room floor in bright viridian, but it wasn't right for me," Gavin laughs, "so it had to go!"

This was seemingly serendipitous, bearing in mind Gavin's affinity with the colour. Even more so, taking into account how he came across the property in the first place. "I actually bought without an estate agent," he explains. "I had friends who lived in the house next door, who visited the people that used to live here all the time. I really liked the layout of these houses, so when my friends happened to mention that the owner of this house was looking to sell, I put in an offer."

Familiar with the area and with many friends living close by, the decision was an easy one to make. "The house was the right size and came about at the right time, and suited the budget. Plus, I've always lived in South London," explains Gavin. "I always think you are either a South or North Londoner."

Prior to Gavin taking ownership, the house had been divided into bedsits, and whilst showing the obvious signs of multiple occupancy, it had remained in reasonable order throughout. The period sash windows were in full working order and, despite the unwanted layers of green paint in the sitting room, the original floorboards throughout the property were still in place. "The house was in a horrible state decoratively, with dreadful bathrooms and kitchen," he says, "but the original layout and features were intact, so I could see the potential."

The only modification Gavin made upon moving in was to separate the two interconnecting rooms on the ground floor by removing the double doors and filling in the space to create a sitting room at the front and a guest bedroom at the back. "The double doors didn't allow for two sofas, so it works much better now," he says. It is a fine detail, but one that comes naturally to Gavin, who is adept at designing spaces that not only look good, but perform well too. "It also means that ▶

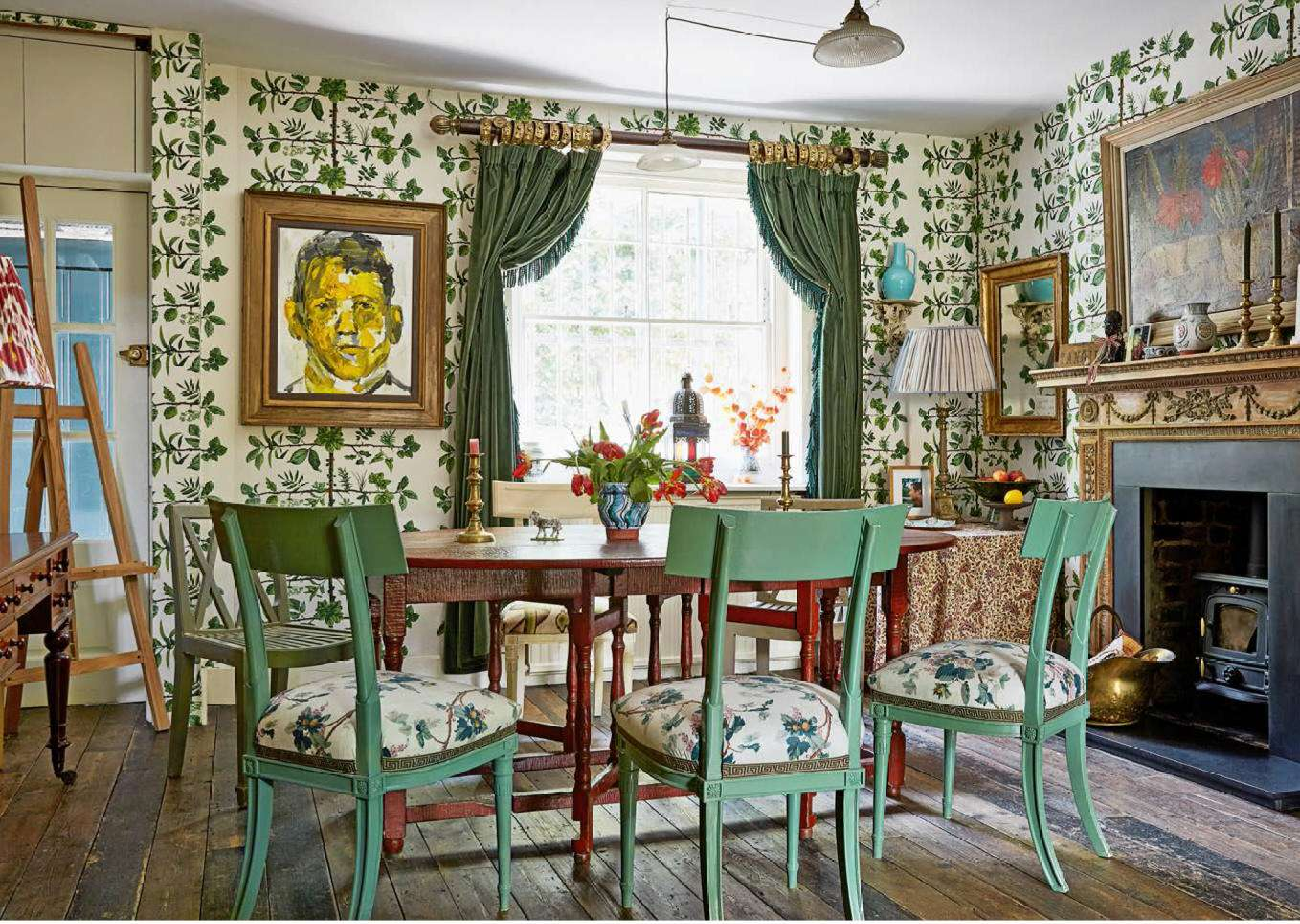


The green sofa is from Christopher Howe. Gavin collects a lot of artwork from friends, family and instagram. The painting of the man in the fez (*bottom left*) is of Boz, painted by Gavin himself. The red cushion is made from Damas and the green cushions are made from Elysée, both by Veraseta at Turnell & Gigon.

ABOVE Stairs lead down to the kitchen and dining room, where Gavin continues his love of bold colour and pattern. The top two decorative ceramic plates are by Michaela Gall and the bottom, green plate is by Hylton Nel.

ABOVE RIGHT An elaborate layering of pattern and colour enlivens an area in the dining room that houses a small desk. Gavin had the lampshade made with ikat fabric he bought in Istanbul.

RIGHT In contrast to the rest of the house, the kitchen is simple in colour and has a utilitarian feel. A vintage rustic-style two-drawer cupboard adds country charm.



'I love a bit of Jean Cocteau, and am also inspired by the Bloomsbury Group and Charleston'

it feels more contained now and the light in the sitting room is really beautiful," he adds. With a kitchen and dining room on the lower ground floor, Gavin and Boz find having the sitting room upstairs provides the perfect grown-up pre-dinner entertaining space before moving downstairs to dine.

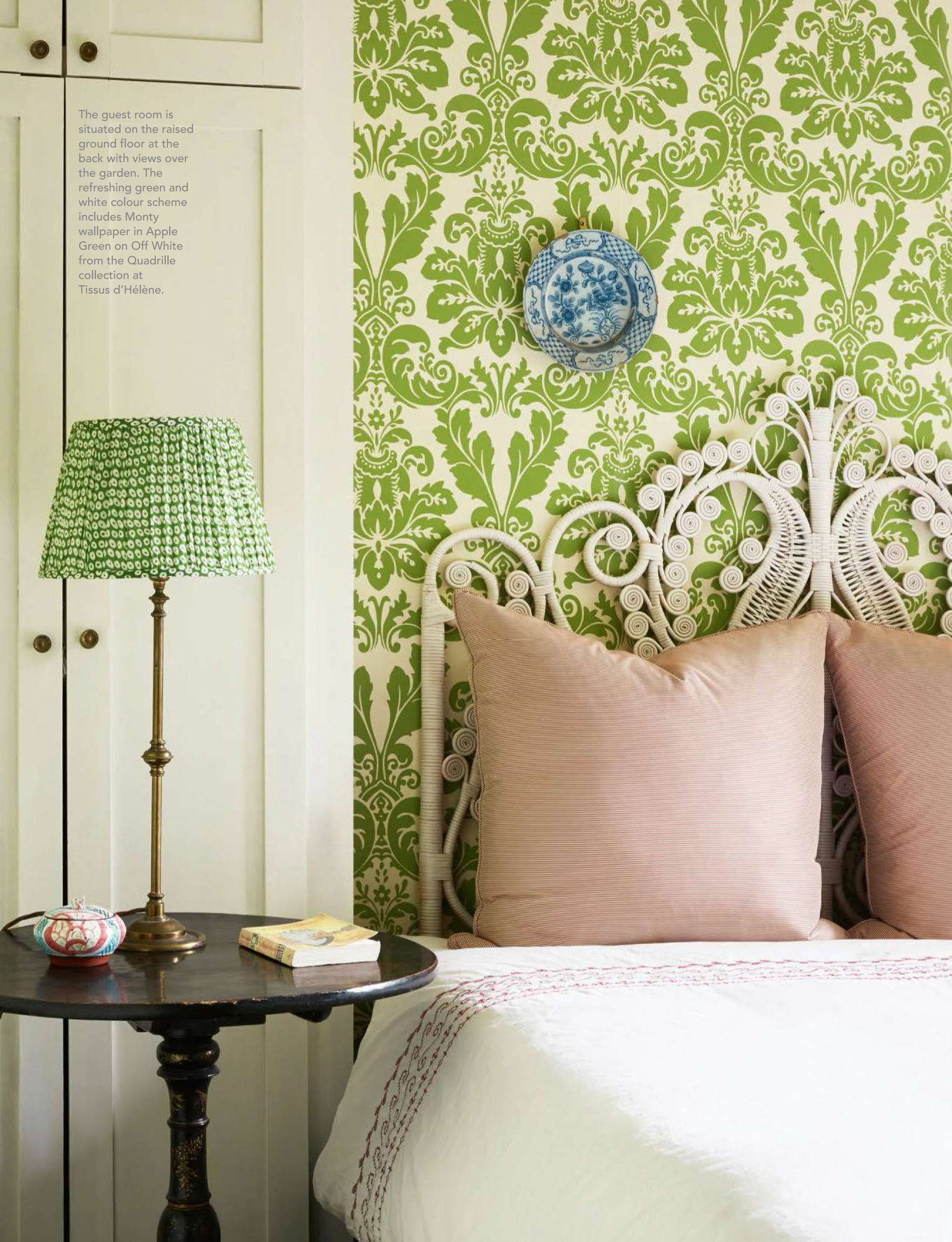
Gavin attributes his eye for eclectic design to "an overload of pattern, surface design and wallpaper" collected from his years spent as a magazine stylist. "I love a bit of Jean Cocteau, and am also inspired by the Bloomsbury Group and Charleston, their country house in East Sussex," he says. His home beautifully showcases this with its eclectic wallpapers, paint colours and decorative accessories, from the rich and sophisticated jewel-like tones of the sitting room, down to the bold yet whimsical, and very green, branch wallpaper in the dining room. "It's Espalier by Pierre Frey," explains Gavin of the wallpaper depicting trained tree branches, "and it is one of my favourites. I like to use it for my clients, who often aren't brave enough to choose it themselves, but once it is on the walls, they absolutely love it." It certainly seems to encapsulate Gavin's style, which he refers to as "classic with a twist".

It is clear to see that Gavin's many talents as a stylist and interior designer are at work throughout the house, from the layering of textures and patterns, to the composition and placing of artwork, as well as some of the decorative effects. "Bringing all the colours together has happened over time and has just evolved. I love this kind of look, there's no real theory," he says. Rather than using standard colours from leading paint manufacturers, he prefers to create his own bespoke shades. "I don't like having the same colours as everyone else," he explains. "My paints are all various Dulux Trade numbers, specially mixed to suit. That is how I was trained."

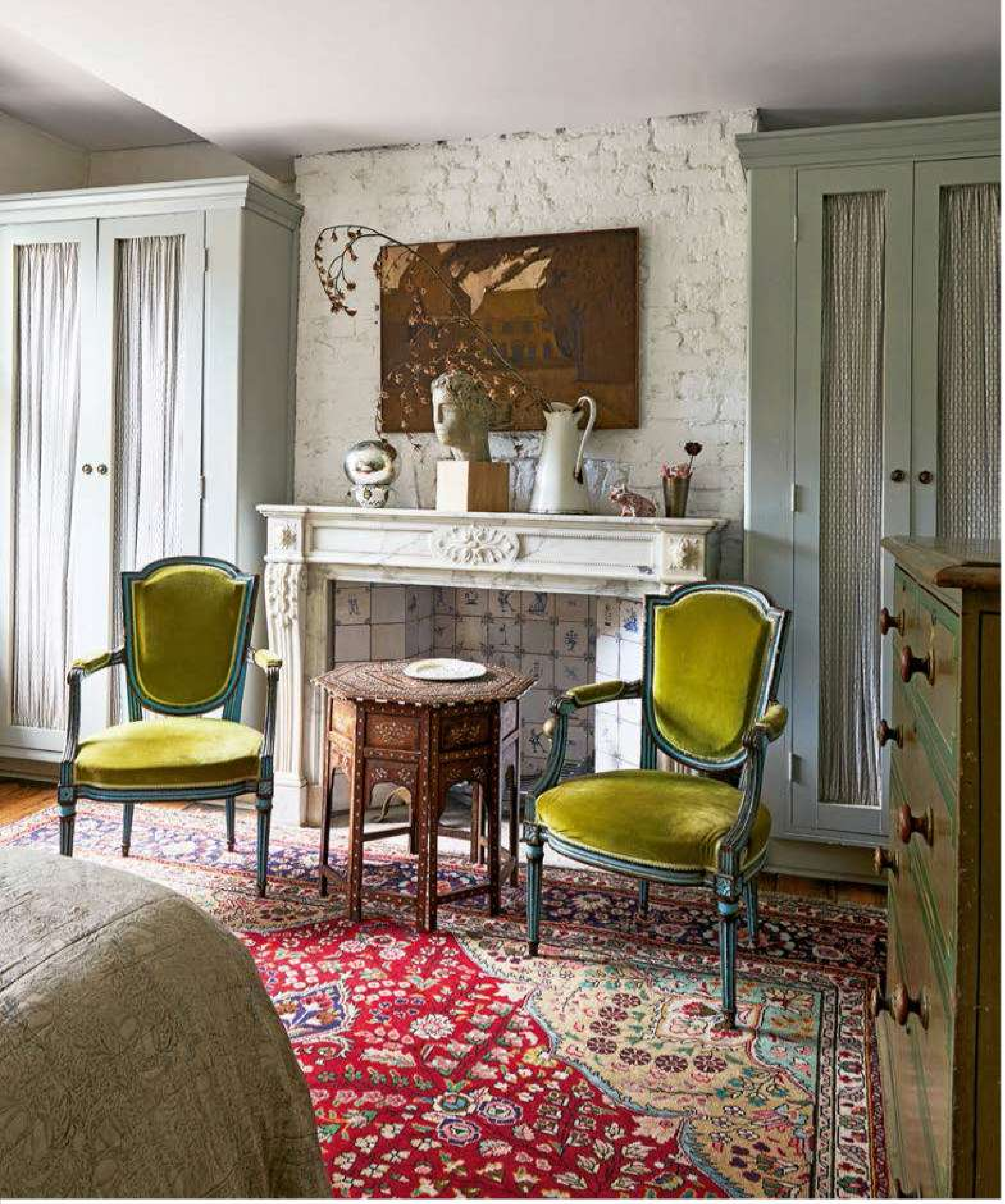
The furniture and decorative fittings, too, are a lovely mix of antiques, either inherited or found along the way, often when sourcing for clients. "The fireplace

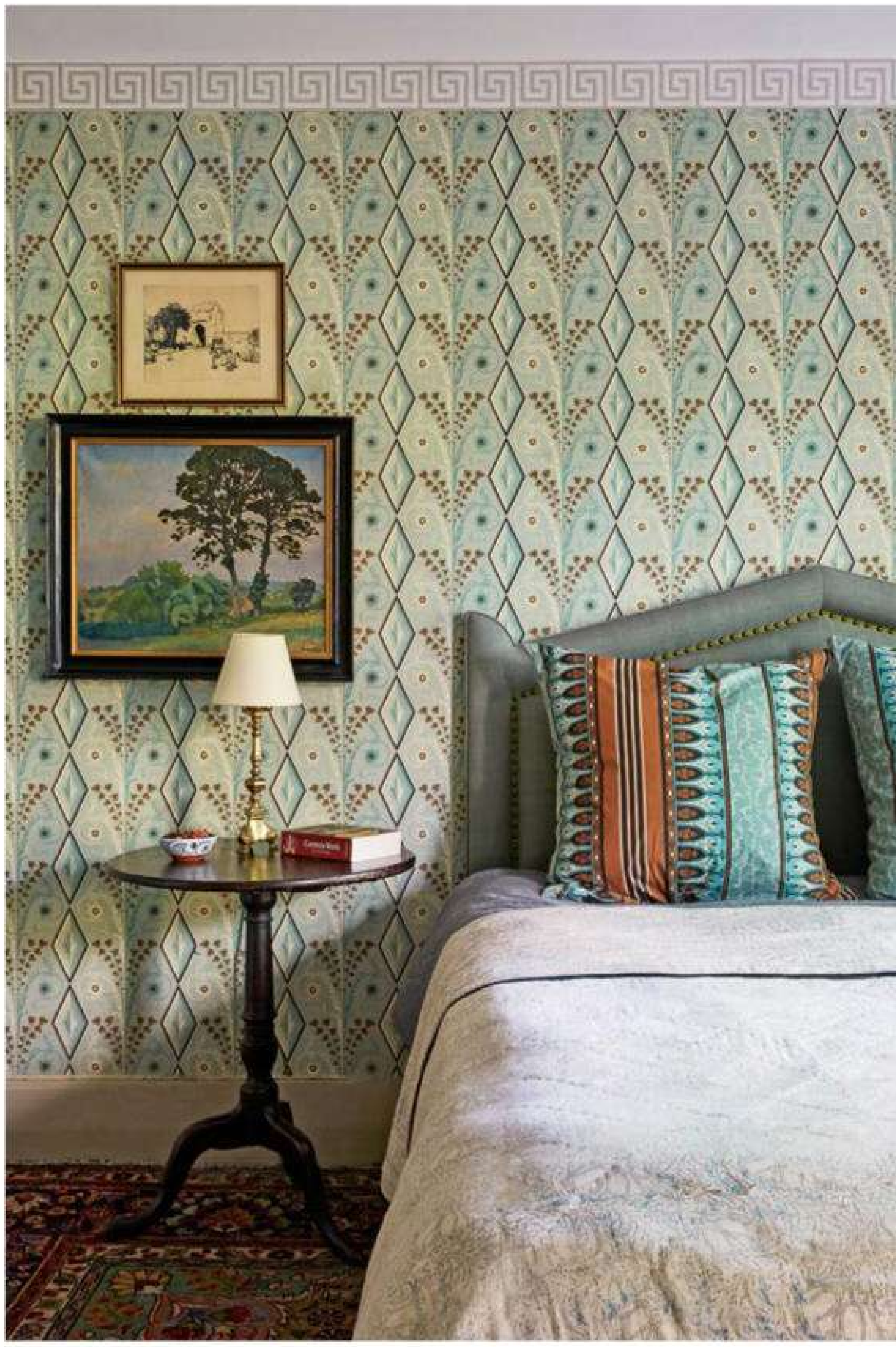
▶

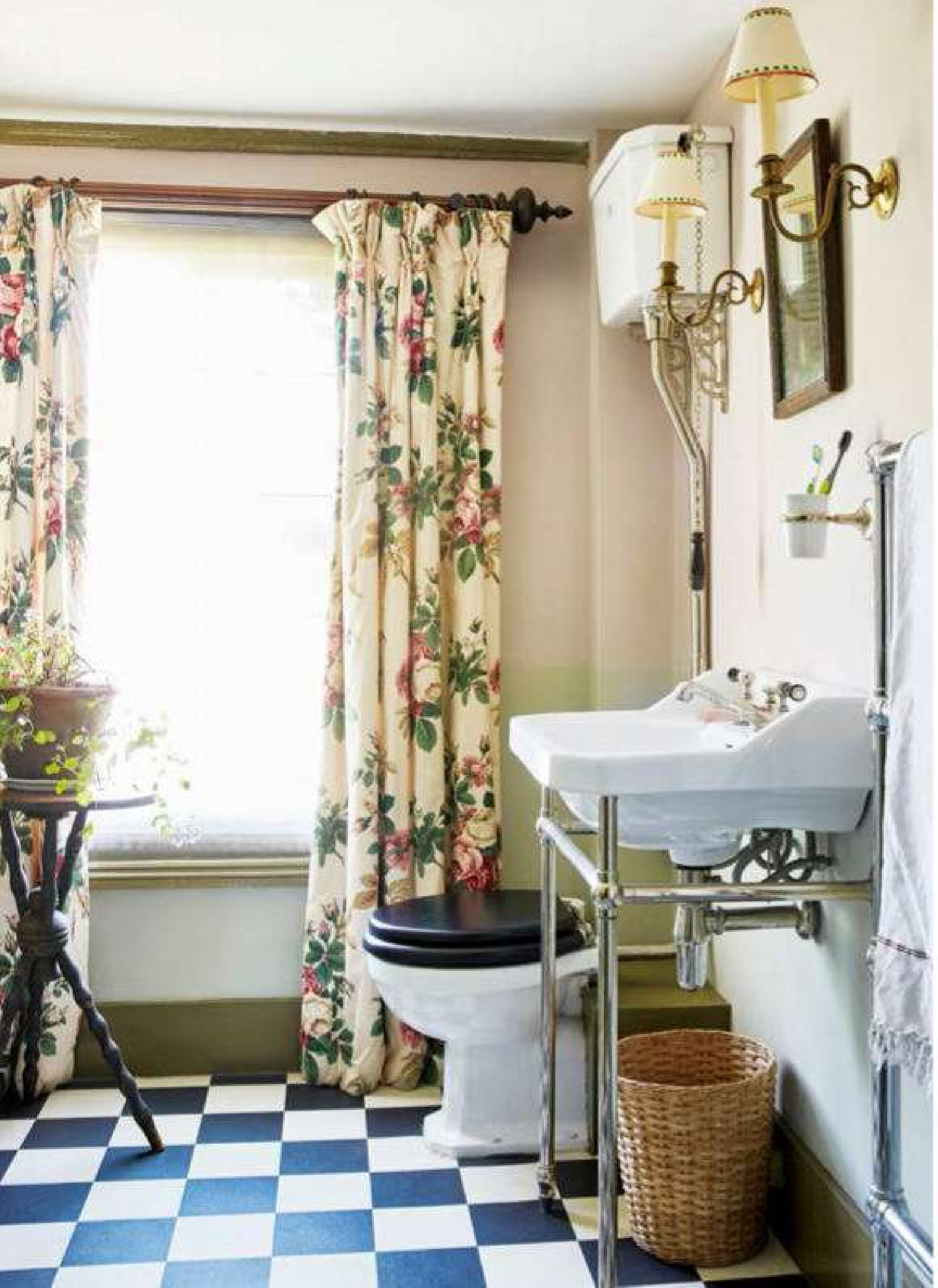
ABOVE The Espalier wallpaper by Pierre Frey sets the mood in the dining room. The dining room table is a Welsh coffin table from Sibyl Colefax and John Fowler that has been given a red paint effect. The chairs are made by Gavin Houghton Design and are covered in Nuts and Berries by Jean Monro at Turnell & Gigon.



The guest room is situated on the raised ground floor at the back with views over the garden. The refreshing green and white colour scheme includes Monty wallpaper in Apple Green on Off White from the Quadrille collection at Tissus d'Hélène.







‘I prefer a look that is more in keeping with that of an English country house’

in the sitting room is one of my favourite pieces, and is from Golborne Road,” Gavin says, referencing the West London interiors and antiques shopping destination. “I love these pine, carved fireplaces, which are meant to be painted but I prefer them stripped. This one is just beautiful,” he adds. A marble fireplace adds grandeur in the main bedroom. “I had some Delft tiles handmade by ceramic artist Douglas Watson to decorate the inside,” Gavin says.

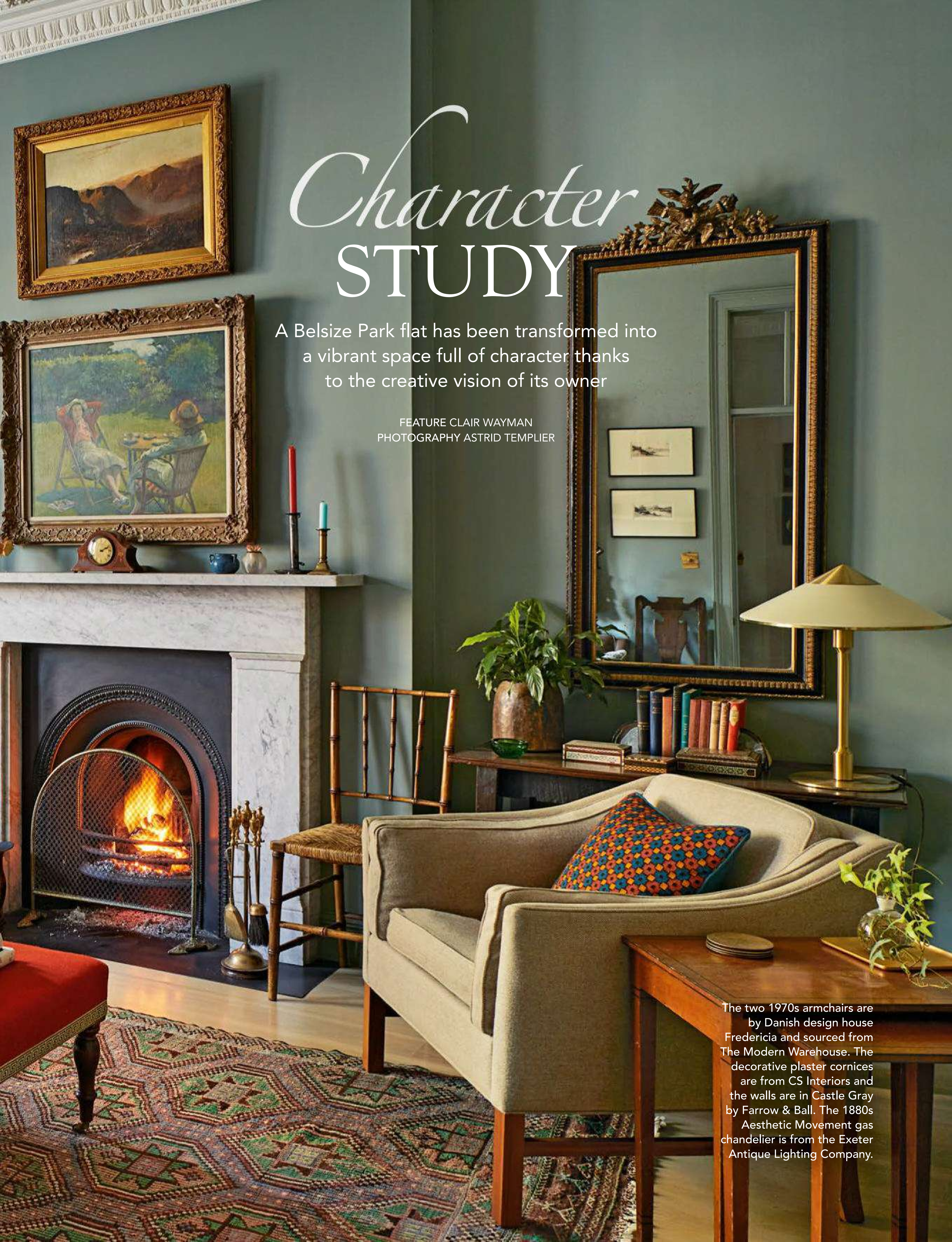
It is the perfect detail to join up with the rest of the visual narrative, one that equates to a warm, welcoming and soft country feel throughout. “I’m just not really mad about urban interiors,” he says when talking about his decorative style. “I prefer a look that makes you feel like you are in the country. Hence the curtains in the sitting room are slightly old-fashioned in style and the fabric has a rambling bramble pattern. It is more in keeping with what you would expect to see in an English country house,” he adds. It most certainly is, and Gavin’s English country style it seems is most certainly at home in the city too. ■

ABOVE LEFT & RIGHT Built-in wardrobes with fabric inserts add rustic appeal in the main bedroom. Gavin chose Gallier Diamond wallpaper and cushions in Lola Montez fabric by Madeleine Castaing, both Brunschwig & Fils at GP & J Baker. LEFT The bathroom hints at Victoriana with period-style sanitaryware from Lefroy Brooks and a chequerboard black and white floor. Curtains in Georgina by Nicholas Herbert soften the look.

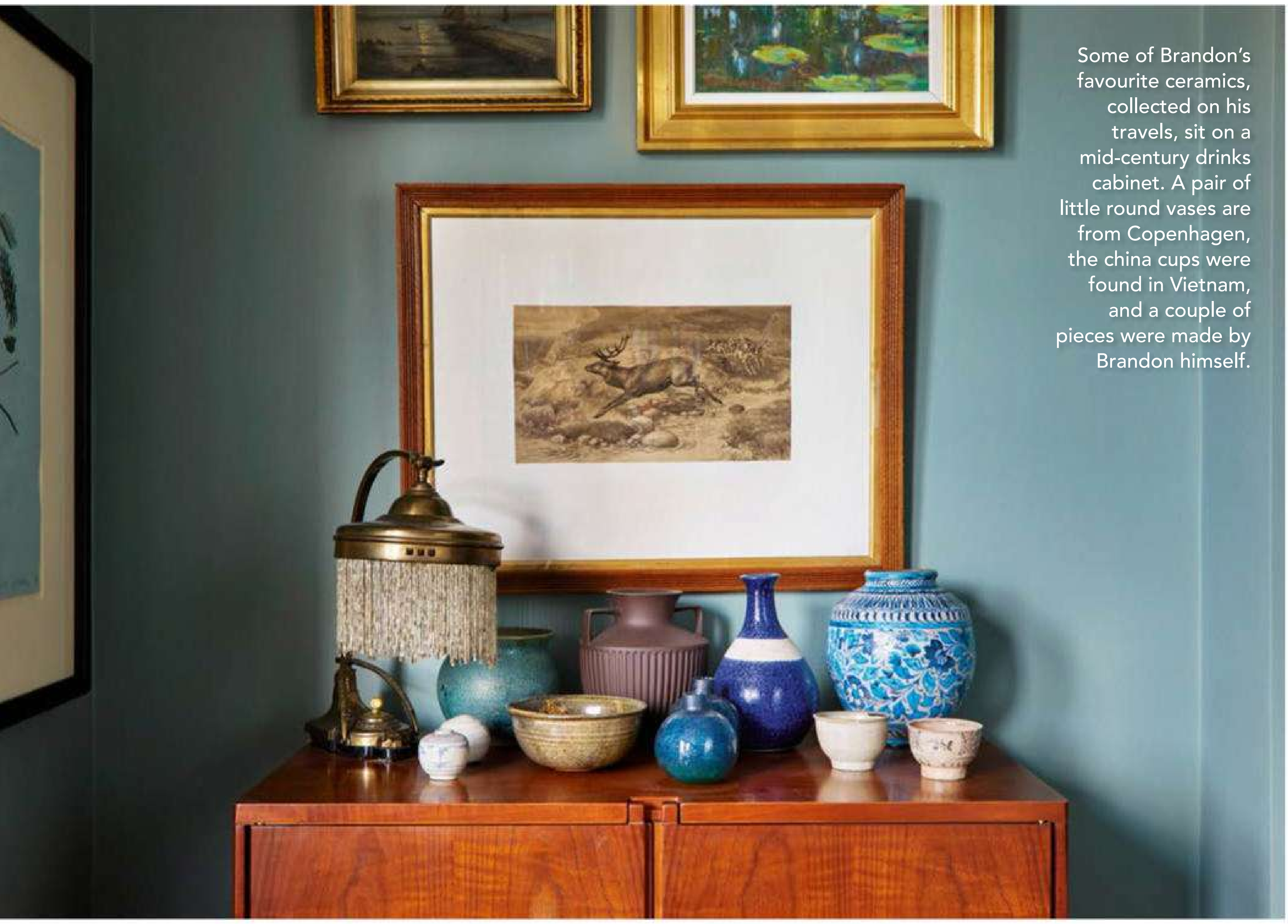
Character STUDY

A Belsize Park flat has been transformed into a vibrant space full of character thanks to the creative vision of its owner

FEATURE CLAIR WAYMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY ASTRID TEMPLIER

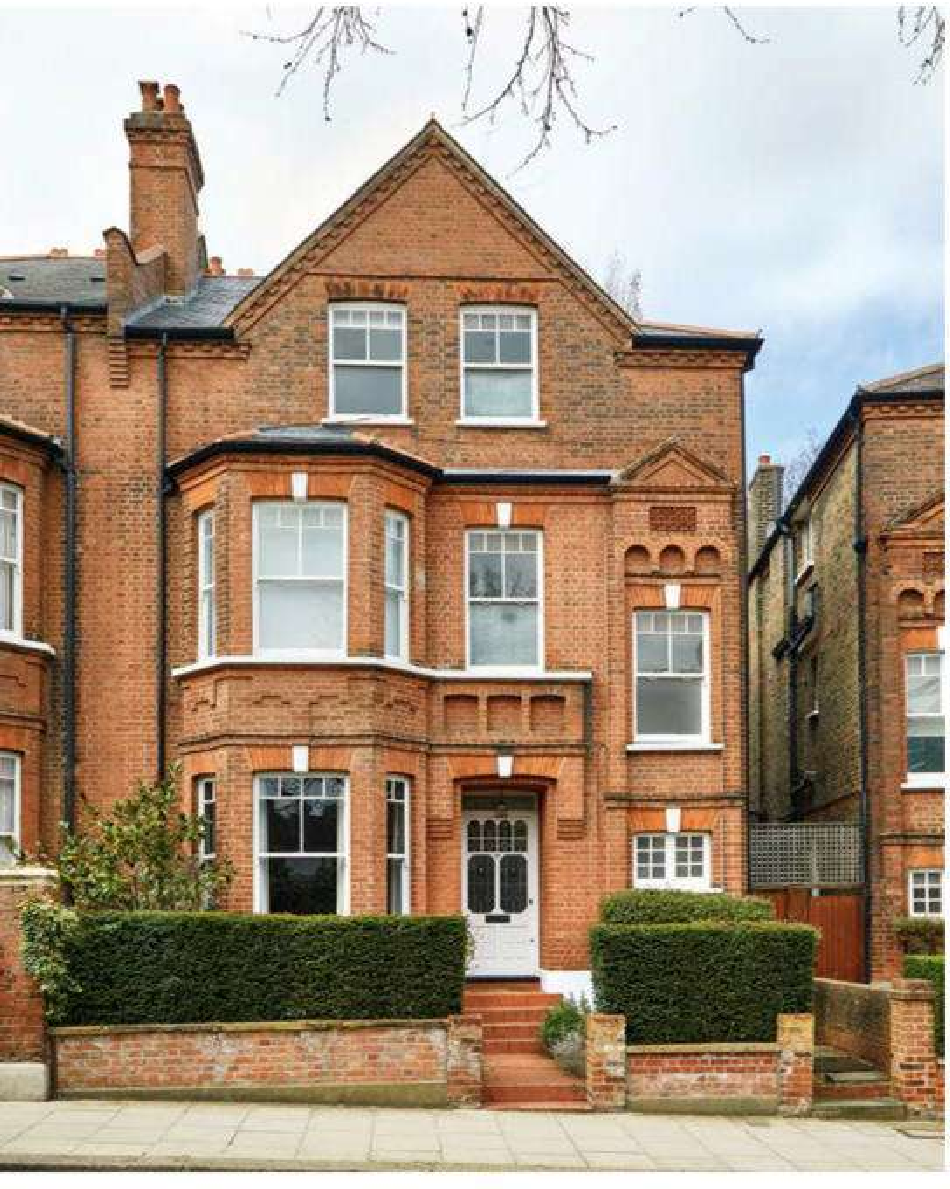


The two 1970s armchairs are by Danish design house Fredericia and sourced from The Modern Warehouse. The decorative plaster cornices are from CS Interiors and the walls are in Castle Gray by Farrow & Ball. The 1880s Aesthetic Movement gas chandelier is from the Exeter Antique Lighting Company.



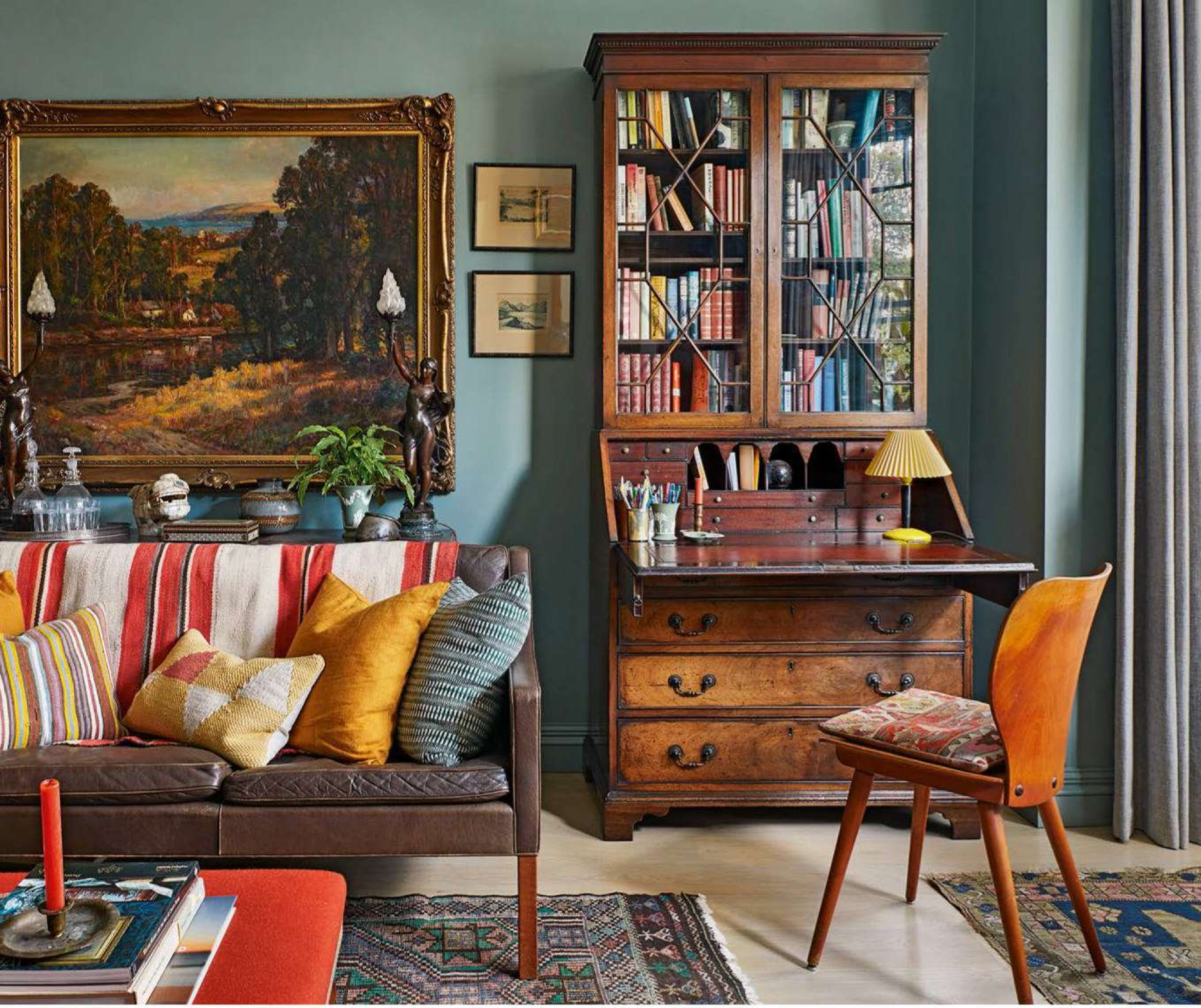
Some of Brandon's favourite ceramics, collected on his travels, sit on a mid-century drinks cabinet. A pair of little round vases are from Copenhagen, the china cups were found in Vietnam, and a couple of pieces were made by Brandon himself.

'The starting point is to think about the inherent characteristics of the building and how to enhance and highlight that'



LEFT The light and airy flat, with its generous proportions and steps leading up to the original leaded glass front door, is on the ground floor of a handsome, late-Victorian house in North London.

BELOW Brandon sits next to a Børge Mogensen chest of drawers from The Modern Warehouse and an antique Le Klint lamp. To see Brandon's interior design work, visit *brandonschubert.com*



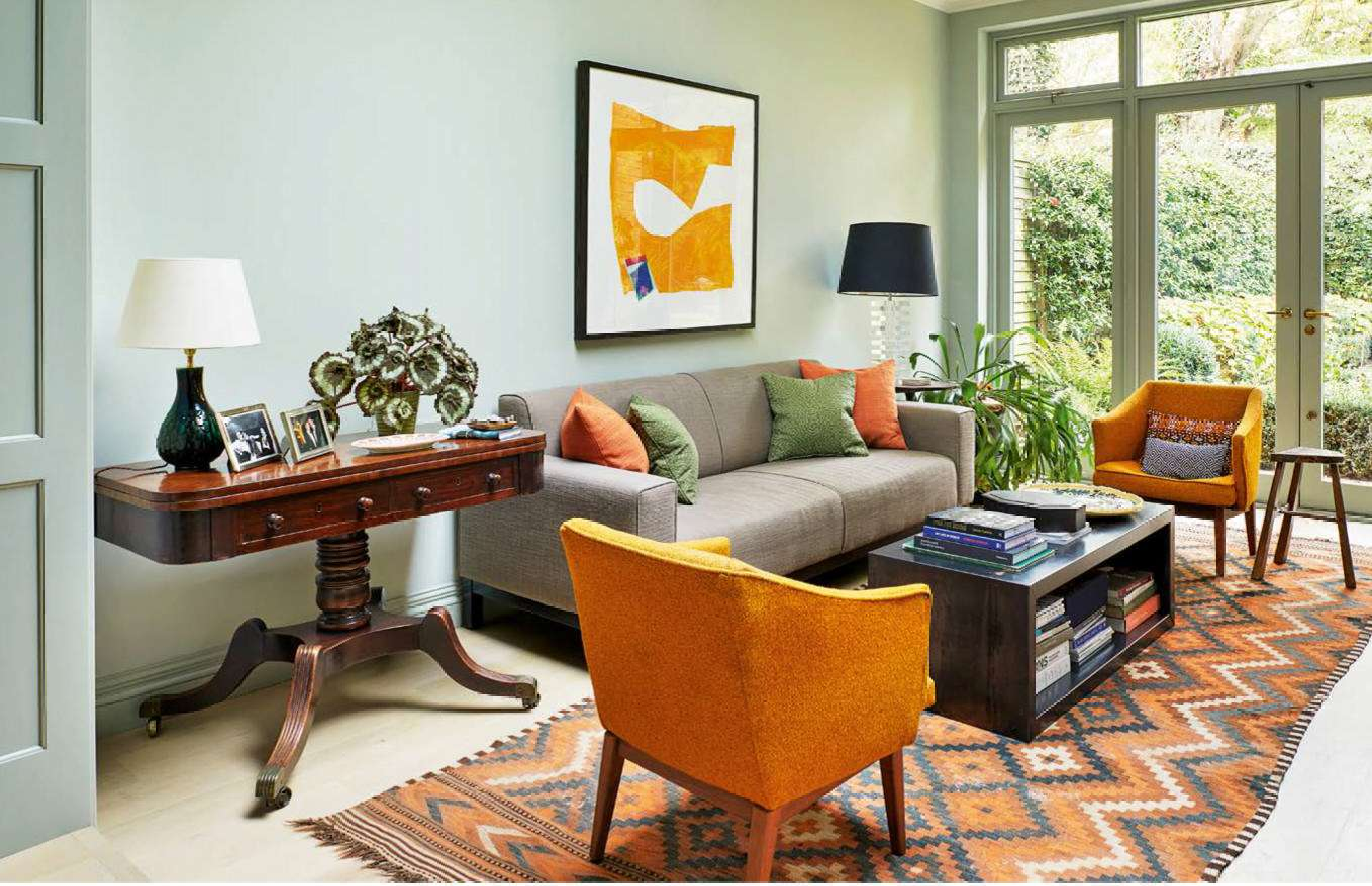
Stepping into Brandon Schubert's light and airy home in Belsize Park, it is hard to imagine how neglected and unloved the space looked just a few short years ago. Back in 2013, Texas-born Brandon and his husband Will were ready to take on a project and could see that this dated flat on the ground floor of an elegant Victorian property was full of possibilities. The house had been converted into three flats in the 1970s and the one they viewed had not been touched since then. "The previous owner, an elderly widower, had recently passed away and left the flat in a dilapidated state," says Brandon. "There was damp everywhere, drafts were coming up through the floorboards and the large garden was so overgrown we couldn't see half of it."

The majority of prospective buyers shied away from such a big project, but Brandon and Will had the creative vision to see past the crumbling interiors. "We are so lucky to have found a garden flat with a large outdoor space that isn't overlooked. Being on the ground floor also means that originally these spaces were the grand reception rooms of the house, so they have generous proportions with high ceilings," Brandon explains.

The couple purchased the flat in January 2014 and enlisted the help of an architect friend to bring their ideas to life and almost double its size by stealing space from the large garden and creating a new, light-filled sitting room and spacious bedroom extension. Planning was granted in July 2014 and work commenced in October that same year.

The property was completely gutted – walls and old plaster ceilings were replaced and sound proofing was added, but the structural walls defining the two main ▶

ABOVE A romantic painting *Cornfields by the Sea* by Garstin Cox hangs above a Børge Mogensen '2209' leather sofa. The Georgian mahogany bureau has been teamed with a 1960s bent-plywood chair by La Manufacture Baumann. Brandon chose a light wood floor throughout the flat to create a contemporary feel.



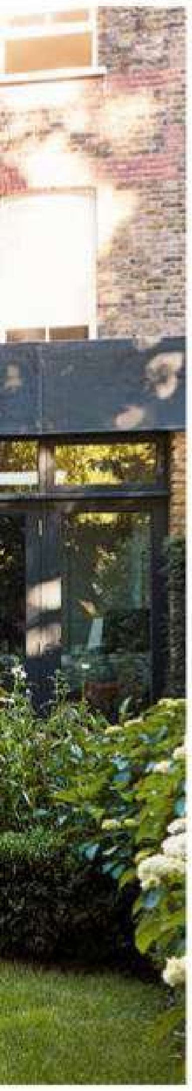
'I'm a big believer in bringing together a mix of furniture styles from different time periods to create a space that feels authentic and inviting'

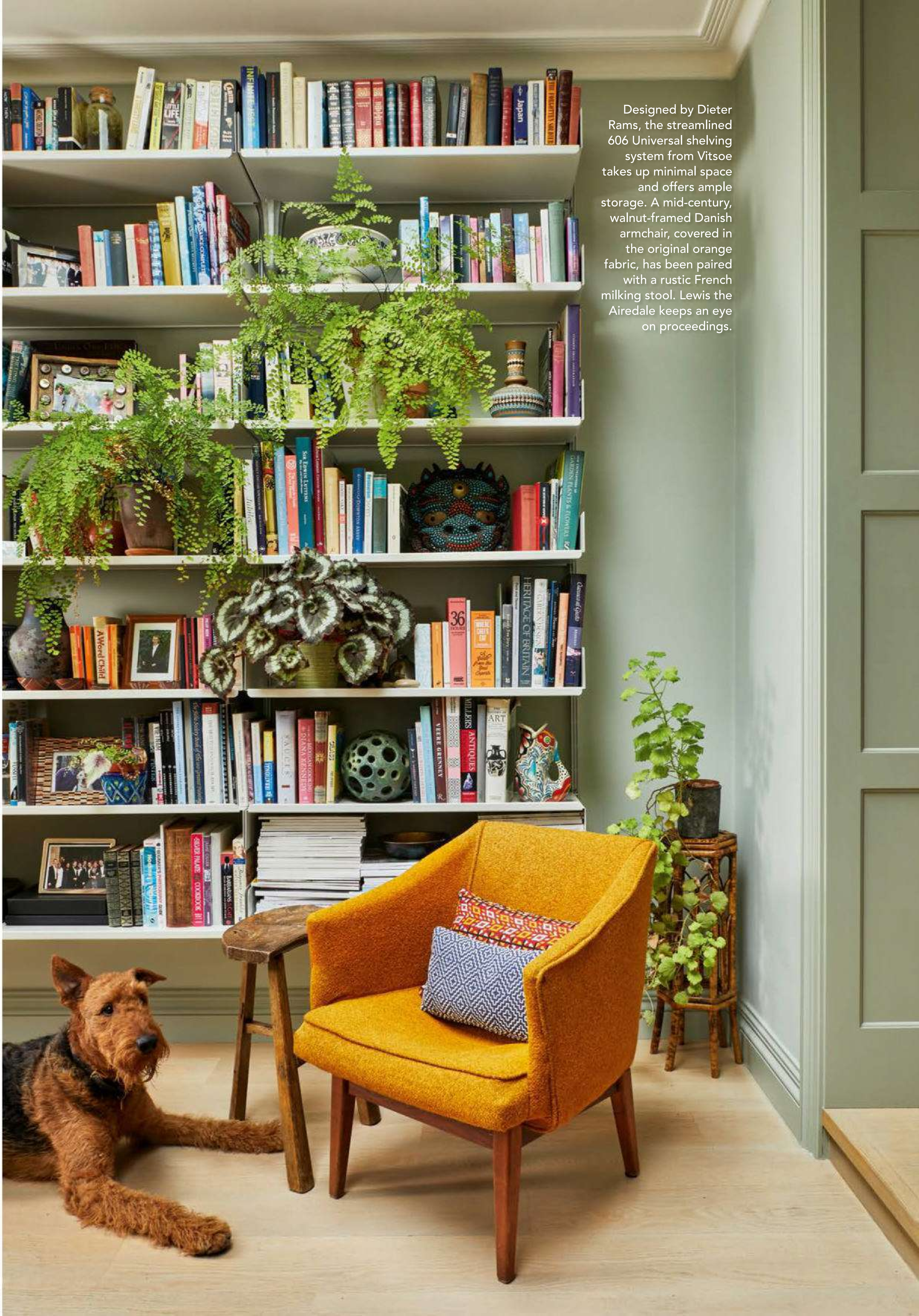
ABOVE In the new sitting room uplifting orange accents contrast with Farrow & Ball's subtle Blue Gray wall colour. Brandon found the boldly patterned Turkish kilim whilst on holiday in Mexico. An antique Georgian table is juxtaposed with a contemporary sofa from Crate & Barrel. **RIGHT** French windows in the new extension open out onto the peaceful and secluded back garden.

reception rooms were kept intact. "We wanted to respect the integrity of the original floor plan so that the two principal rooms of the house would still feel like beautiful, spacious reception rooms." Brandon explains. "I firmly believe that the starting point for any interior in an older property is to think about the proportions, the inherent characteristics of the building and how to enhance and highlight that."

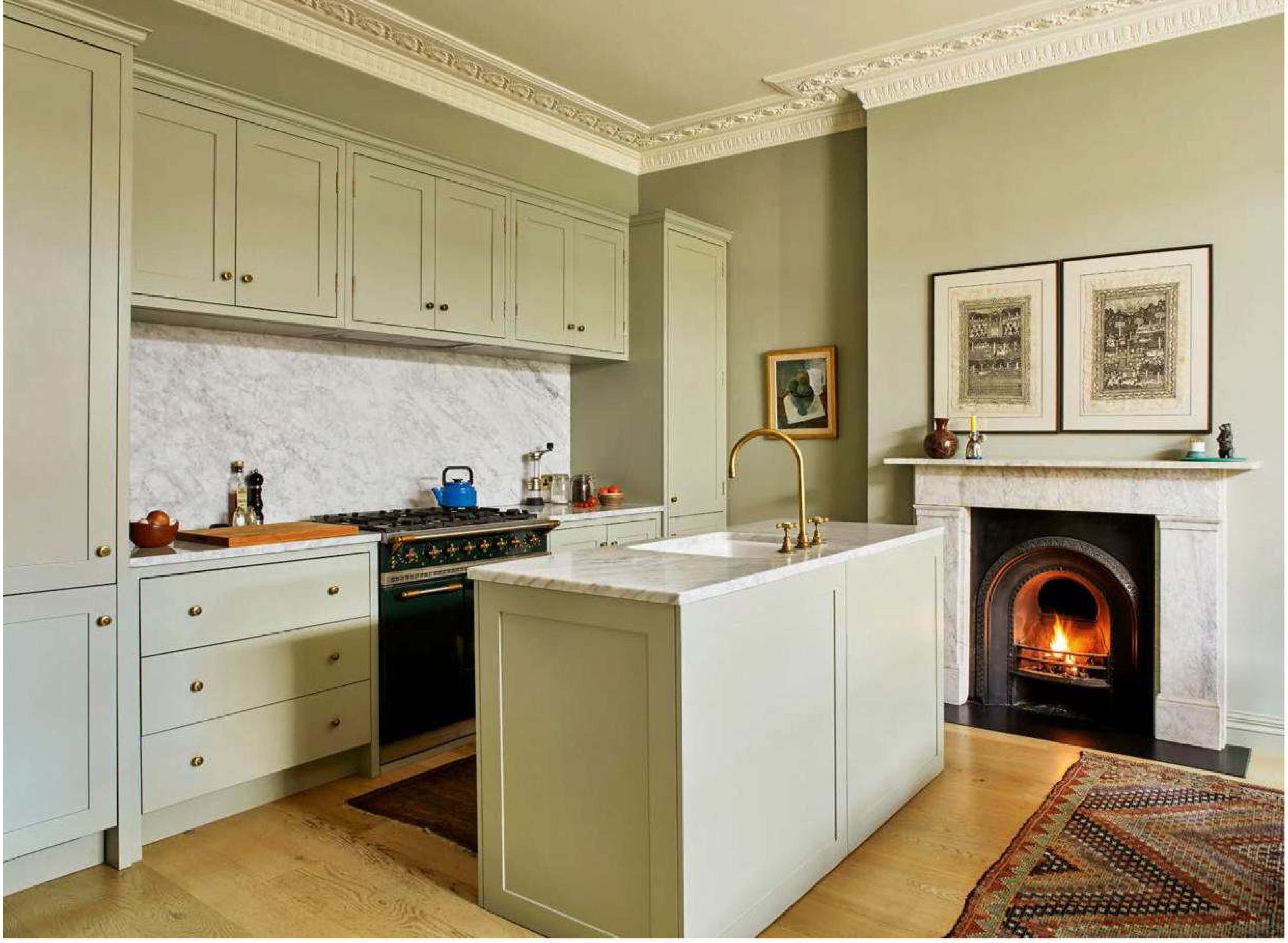
One of Brandon's main concerns was putting the kitchen into one of the grand reception rooms and making that work. He played around with a lot of different kitchen layouts and came up with a simple, functional design that also allowed for a dining table to fit in to the space. "I didn't want to compromise the proportions or detract from this room in any way, so I had the cabinets and walls painted in the same pale sage green colour as the walls to make the kitchen recede," he says.

This wall colour flows into the connecting living area, creating a sense of space, unifying the two rooms, and leading the eye out to the leafy garden beyond. "In a small space it's helpful to link all the rooms together with certain elements, such as a simple colour palette and the same flooring throughout," says Brandon. ▸





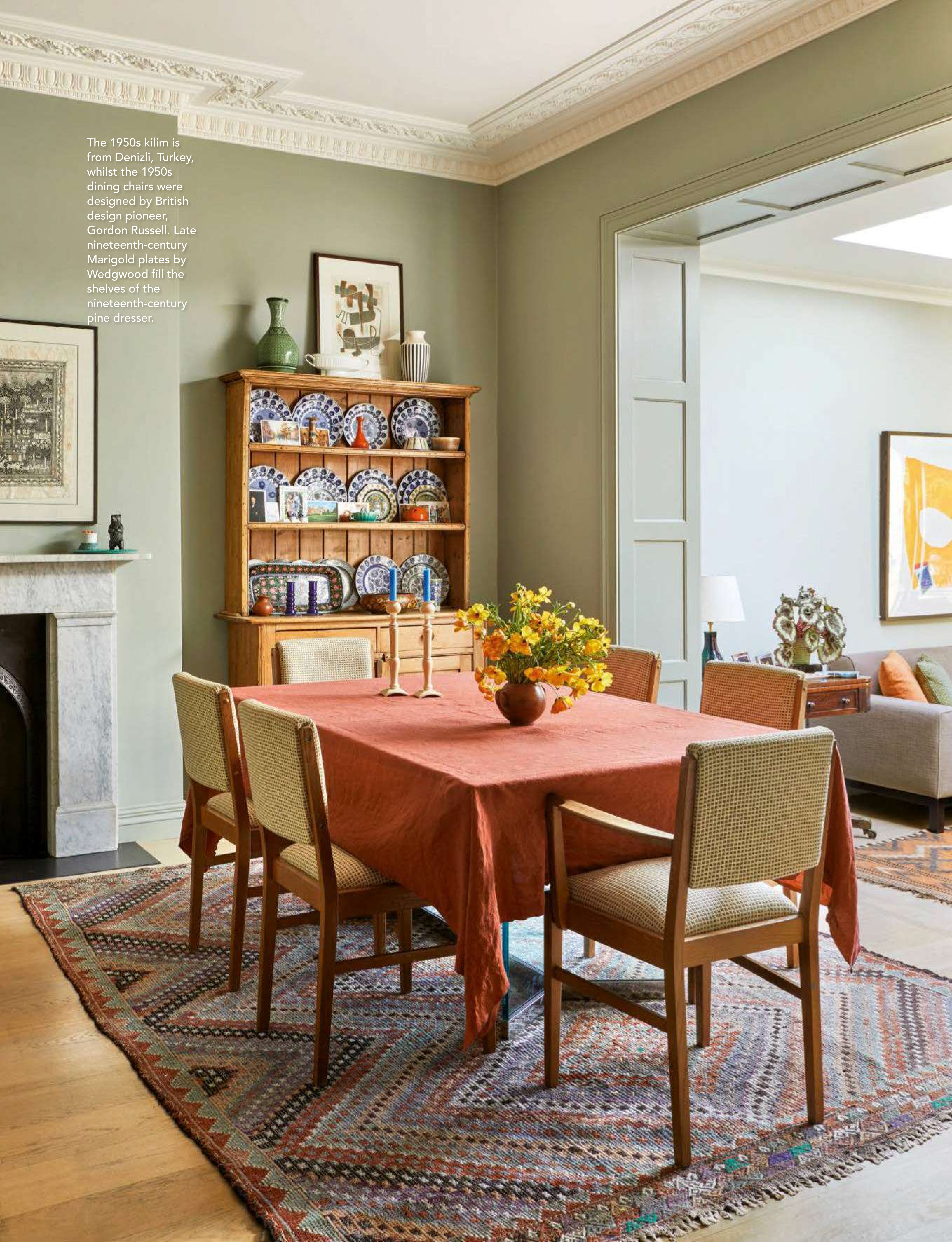
Designed by Dieter Rams, the streamlined 606 Universal shelving system from Vitsoe takes up minimal space and offers ample storage. A mid-century, walnut-framed Danish armchair, covered in the original orange fabric, has been paired with a rustic French milking stool. Lewis the Airedale keeps an eye on proceedings.



ABOVE The custom-built Shaker-style kitchen cabinets have been painted in the same colour as the walls, Blue Gray by Farrow & Ball. Brandon stripped the lacquer and antiqued the door knobs from A & H Brass on the cabinets. The brass tap is from Barber Wilsons. The Carrara marble splashback and work surfaces tie in with the antique fireplace from The Architectural Forum. RIGHT The flat was reconfigured and the hallway created from scratch, with walls painted in Farrow & Ball's Pavilion Gray.

Looking around the flat it is clear to see Brandon's natural ability to create invigorating, uplifting spaces. A lively collection of art, vibrant textiles and a mix of well-curated, beautifully designed furniture contrasts against a calm backdrop of subdued wall colours. "I'm a big believer in bringing together a mix of furniture styles from different time periods to create a space that feels authentic and inviting," he explains. "The most important thing is that the furniture itself is well designed and has character so it doesn't really matter whether it comes from 1780 or 1980. Beautifully made pieces from any era can sit together in a comfortable, cohesive way. In our new sitting room, for example, I've positioned a rustic milking stool next to a 1950s mid-century armchair, which also sits near a Georgian tripod table. To me that seems obvious because individually they are all beautiful objects. There's a thread that ties these pieces together, a purity to form and a respect for proportion, and those things carry across the centuries."

Having grown up in a creative family in Dallas, Texas and spent a lot of time in Mexico as a child, Brandon's design influences are varied. He has fond memories of designing his own bedroom schemes with his mother and was drawn to the arts programs at school, but went down a more academic route and made a successful career as a lawyer. ▶



The 1950s kilim is from Denizli, Turkey, whilst the 1950s dining chairs were designed by British design pioneer, Gordon Russell. Late nineteenth-century Marigold plates by Wedgwood fill the shelves of the nineteenth-century pine dresser.

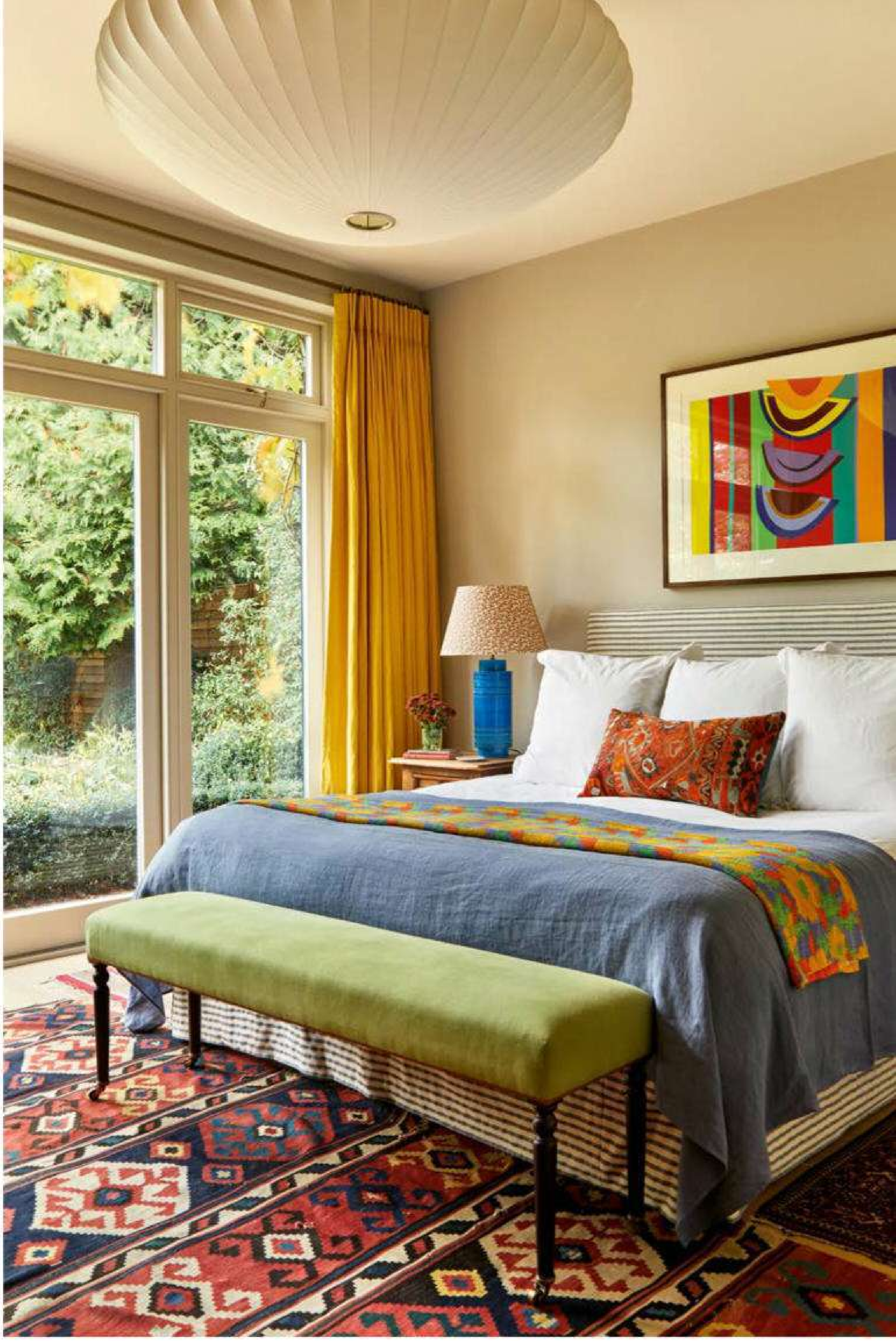
‘Being able to open the curtains and look out on a garden with the sunlight streaming through the trees, is bliss’

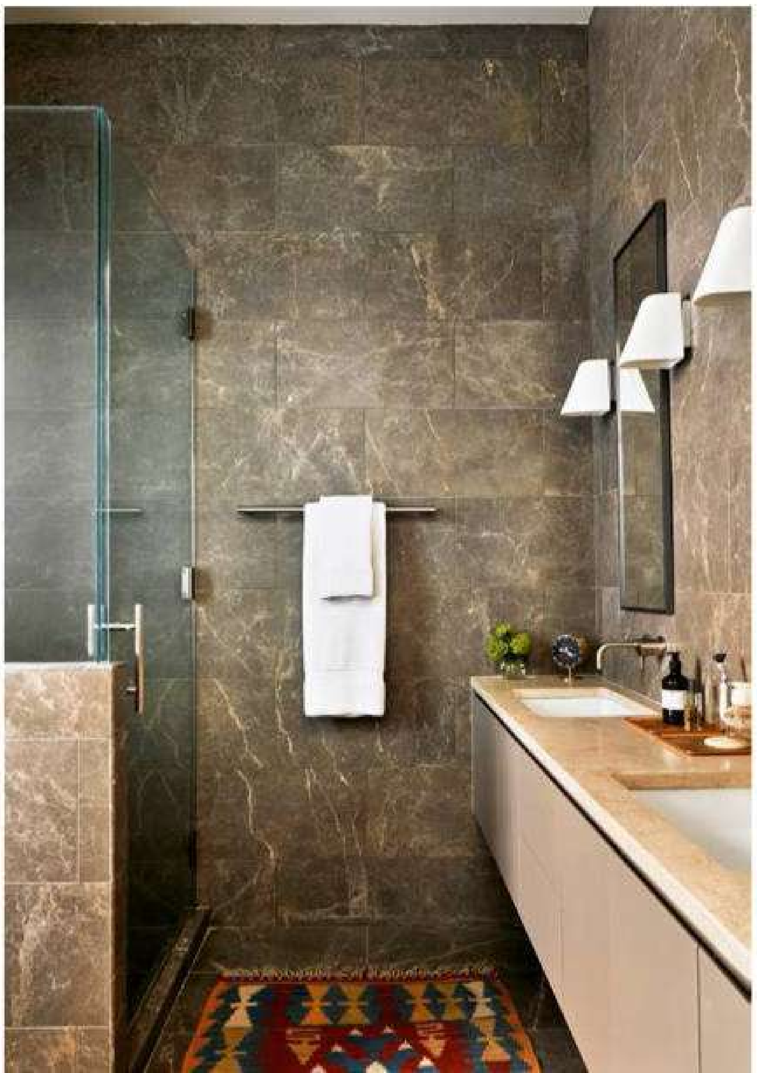
During the renovation, Brandon was still working as a busy lawyer and it was only after completing the apartment that the idea of becoming an interior designer started to percolate. “Interestingly, we did the entire renovation when I was a full-time lawyer, so I was buying taps, door knobs and hinges at my desk at the law firm,” says Brandon. Learning as he went, he modestly insists that the schemes came together due to luck rather than judgement. “I didn’t have any idea what I was doing at the time, we just made a choice, then another choice and somehow it all came together.”

Soon after the completion of the project, Brandon quit his job as a lawyer and enrolled in the Inchbald School of Design. He then landed a job at Ben Pentreath’s illustrious design studio, where he spent three productive and enjoyable years, before setting up as an interior designer in his own right in 2019.

When asked what his favourite space is, Brandon struggles to make a decision as he is so proud of the whole flat. “The front sitting room often doubles as my office and working in such a cosy, luxurious interior is really inspiring. I also love my bedroom – being able to open the bedroom curtains in the morning and look out on a beautifully designed garden that isn’t overlooked, with sunlight streaming through the trees, is bliss. I’m convinced that it’s the most peaceful bedroom in London. You can’t hear a sound – it just feels completely private and secluded.”

Prior to their move to Belsize Park, Brandon and Will lived in an oppressive, dark basement flat in a Fitzrovian mansion block and were determined to make a better life for themselves. “Will and I feel that where you live and the space that you inhabit is so important to happiness and well-being. We still can’t believe we live in such beautiful surroundings now – we feel lucky to have created a home that brings us so much joy.” ■





RIGHT Brandon wanted the bathroom to feel contemporary and functional, similar to a hotel bathroom, so he designed a floating washstand which also makes the room feel bigger. The brown marble tiles are from Mandarin Stone.

ABOVE The bedroom is layered with a colourful mix of textiles, including a vintage Indian kantha quilt from Warris Vianni. The Olive Sacking headboard and valance fabric is from the Guy Goodfellow Collection. The striking antique kilim is from Drew Pritchard Antiques. A reissued Bitossi vase has been turned into a table lamp and teamed with a shade made using Folly by Veere Grenney from Tissus d’Hélène.

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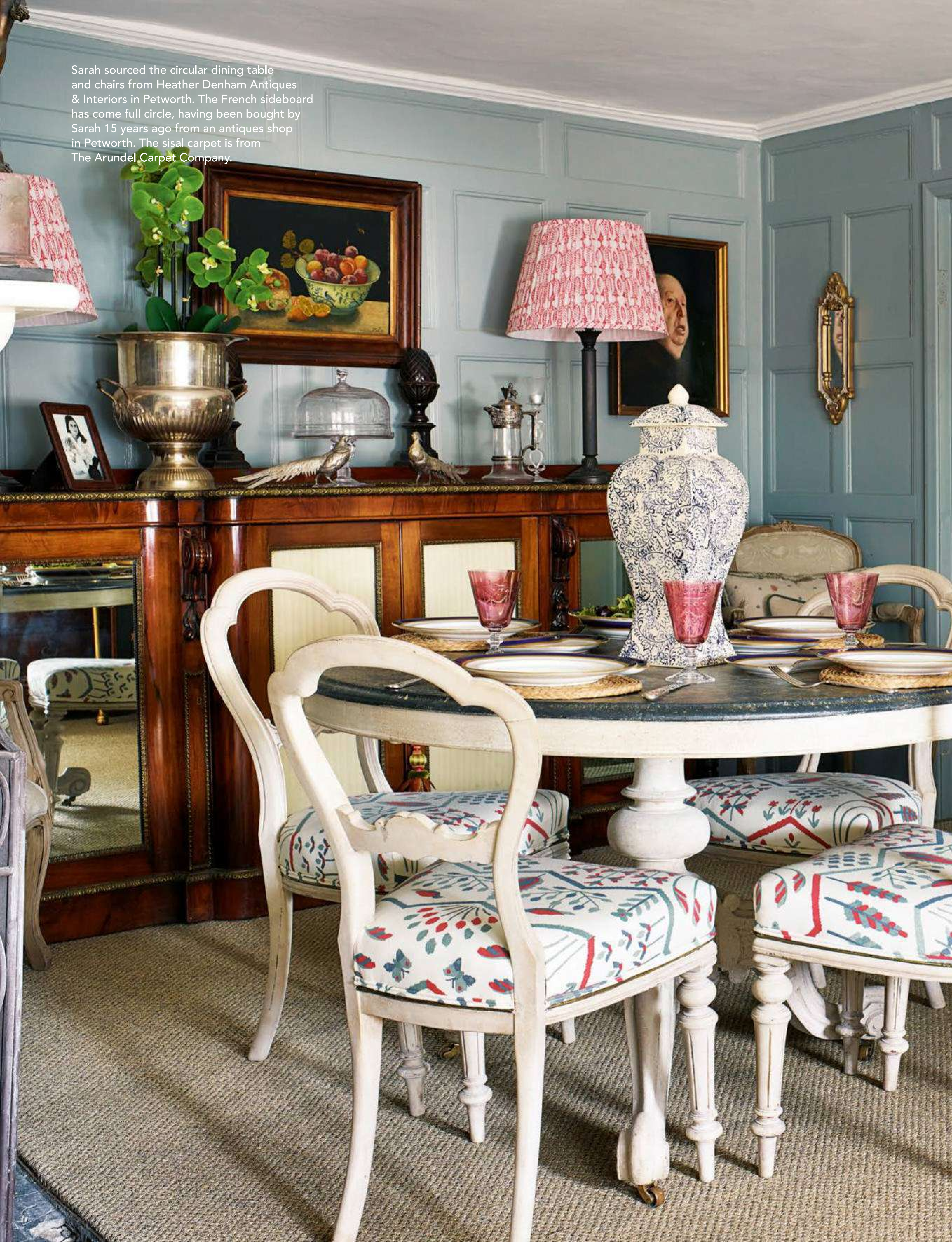
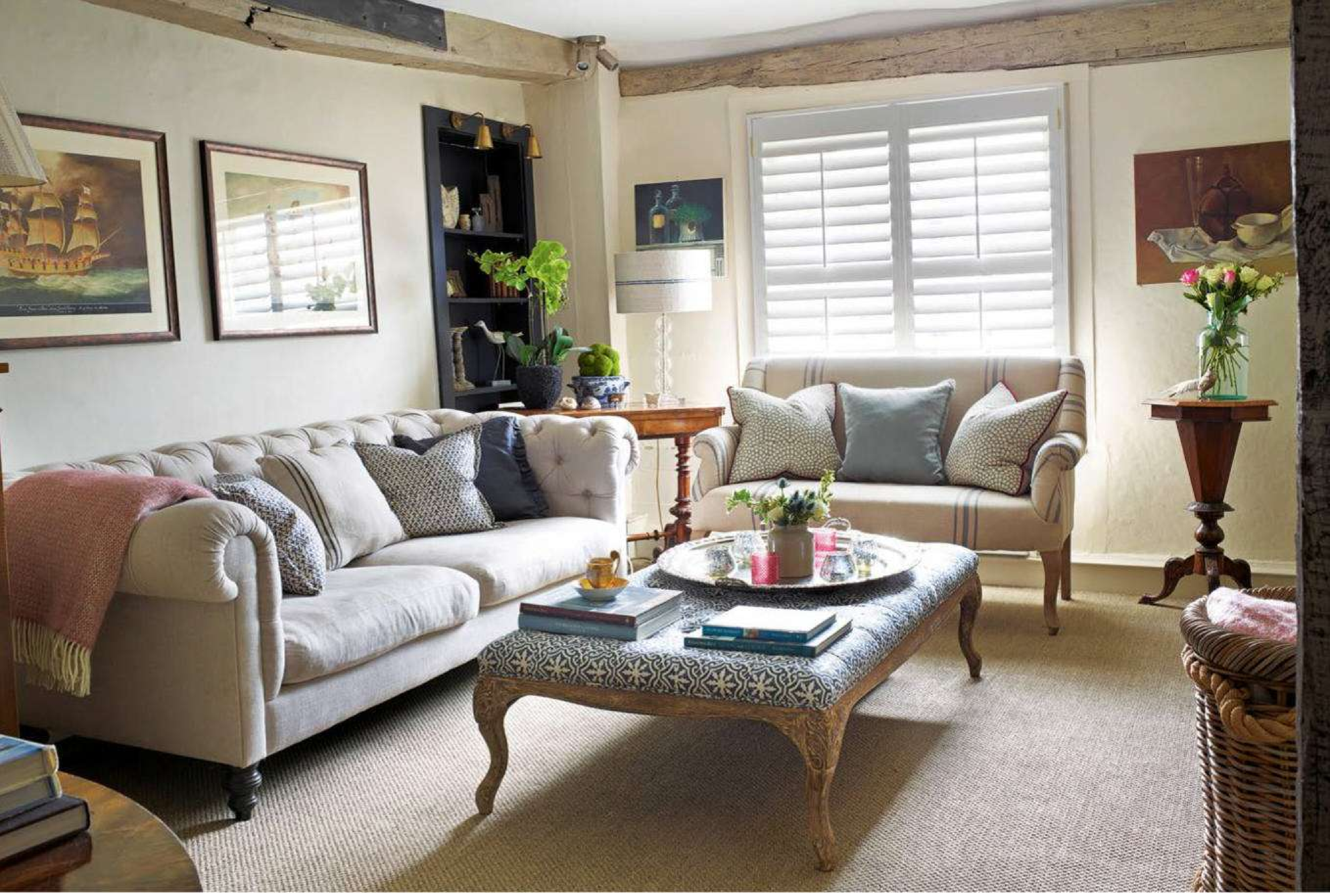


Sarah sourced the circular dining table and chairs from Heather Denham Antiques & Interiors in Petworth. The French sideboard has come full circle, having been bought by Sarah 15 years ago from an antiques shop in Petworth. The sisal carpet is from The Arundel Carpet Company.

Happy COINCIDENCE

When serendipity struck, Sarah Gordon seized the opportunity to breathe new life in to a sixteenth-century property in the heart of historic Petworth

FEATURE & STYLING JANET MCMEEKIN
PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH



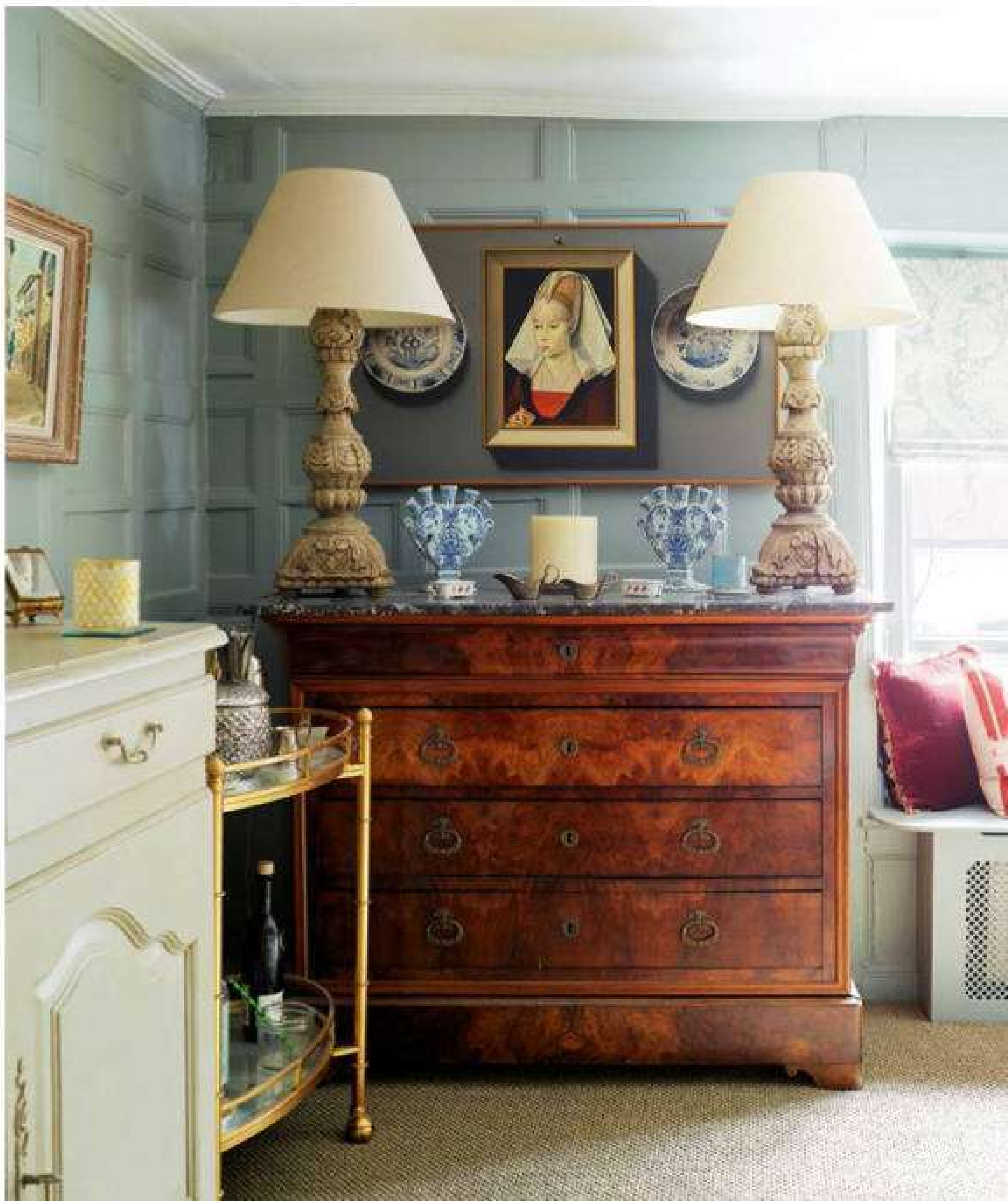
'My flat is in a rural town, but actually not too far from the coast, so I wanted to reflect the location with an eclectic mix of styles'

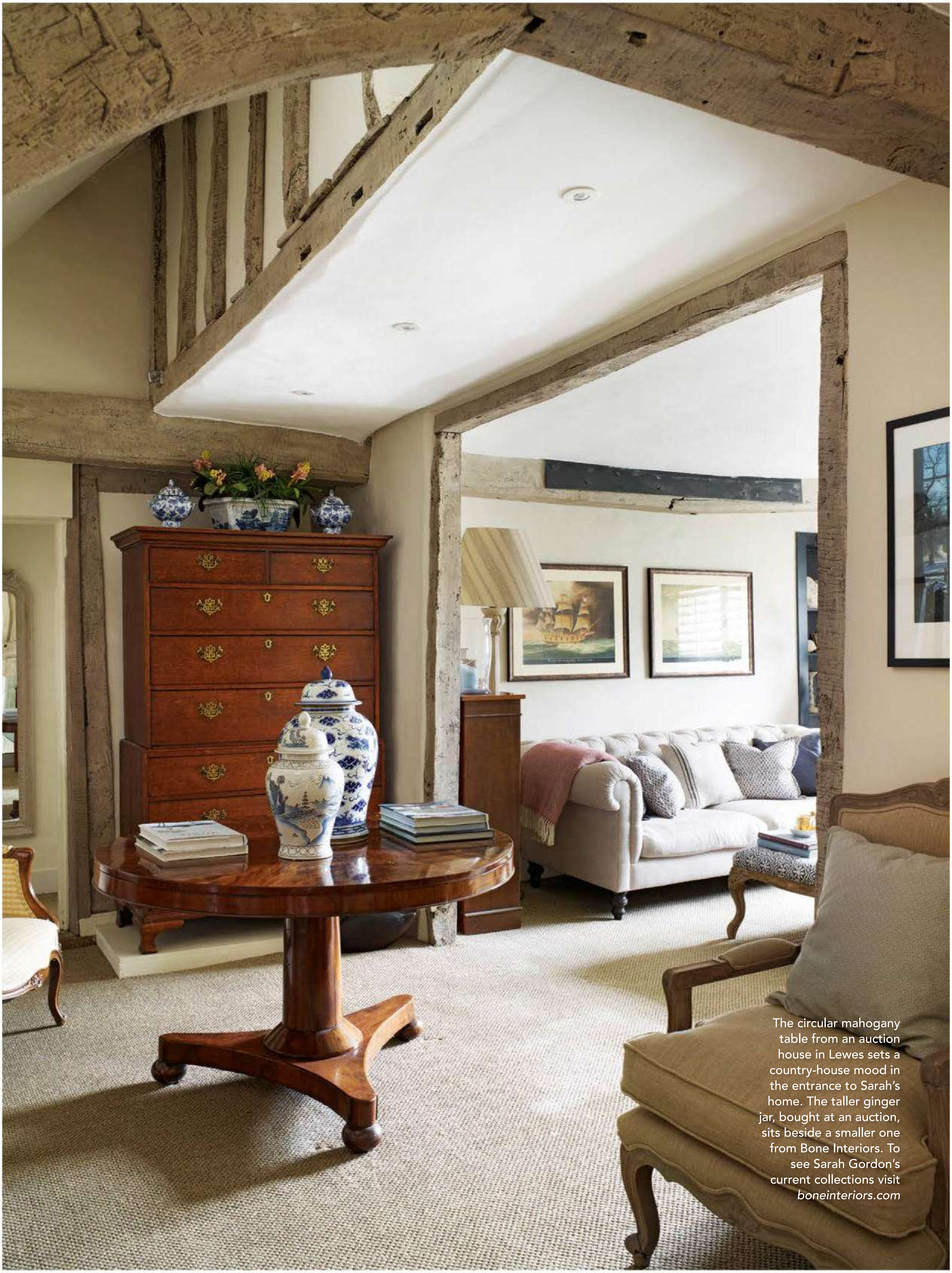
ABOVE The ottoman in the cosy sitting room is upholstered in Peony & Sage's Lakshmi Large in Squid Ink to pull the navy and taupe scheme together. The Tom Lane throw on the arm of The White Company sofa adds an accent of pink. The grainsack sofa is from Sarah's shop, Bone Interiors. **RIGHT** In the dining room, Belgian lamps make a statement on a mahogany chest of drawers, bought about 30 years ago at Lots Road Auctions. The painting is by Clifford Harrison.

When Sarah Gordon began converting a dated former dental surgery in the historic market town of Petworth, West Sussex, into a charming first-floor flat for herself, she had not anticipated that it would occasionally double up as an impromptu showroom for her interiors business. "My shop, Bone Interiors, is situated on the ground floor of the property, and now and again, customers pop up here with me to see how a particular item will look in a home setting," Sarah says. "I find this very sociable and not at all intrusive as I'm extremely passionate about interiors and my work and home life are intrinsically interlinked."

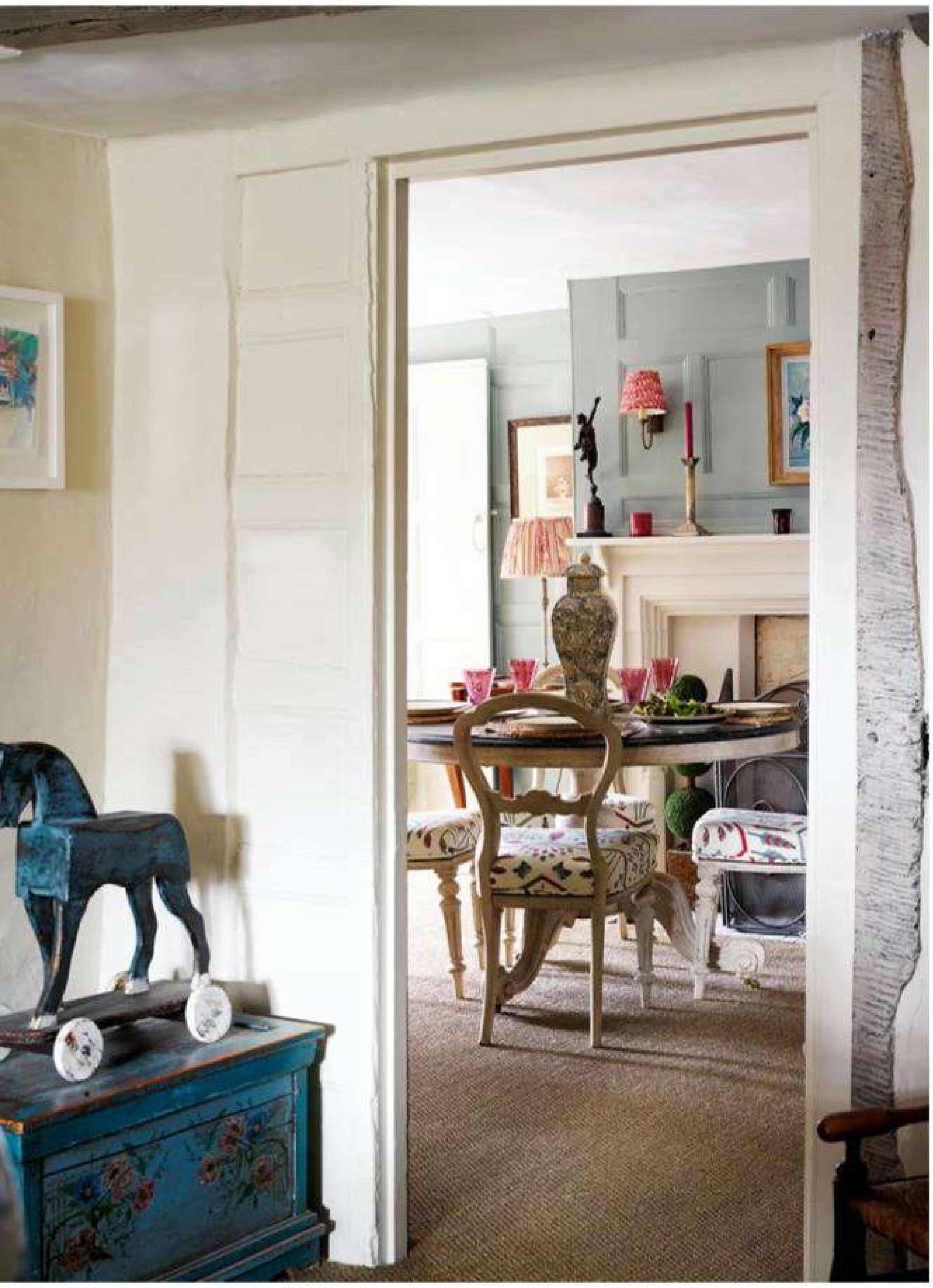
Back in 2015, Sarah's life was turned upside down when her husband, Dominic, died unexpectedly. "It was a massive shock," she confides. "At the time, I was living in a large Edwardian country house in Surrey and was running my interiors business in Cranleigh. Suddenly, everything changed dramatically."

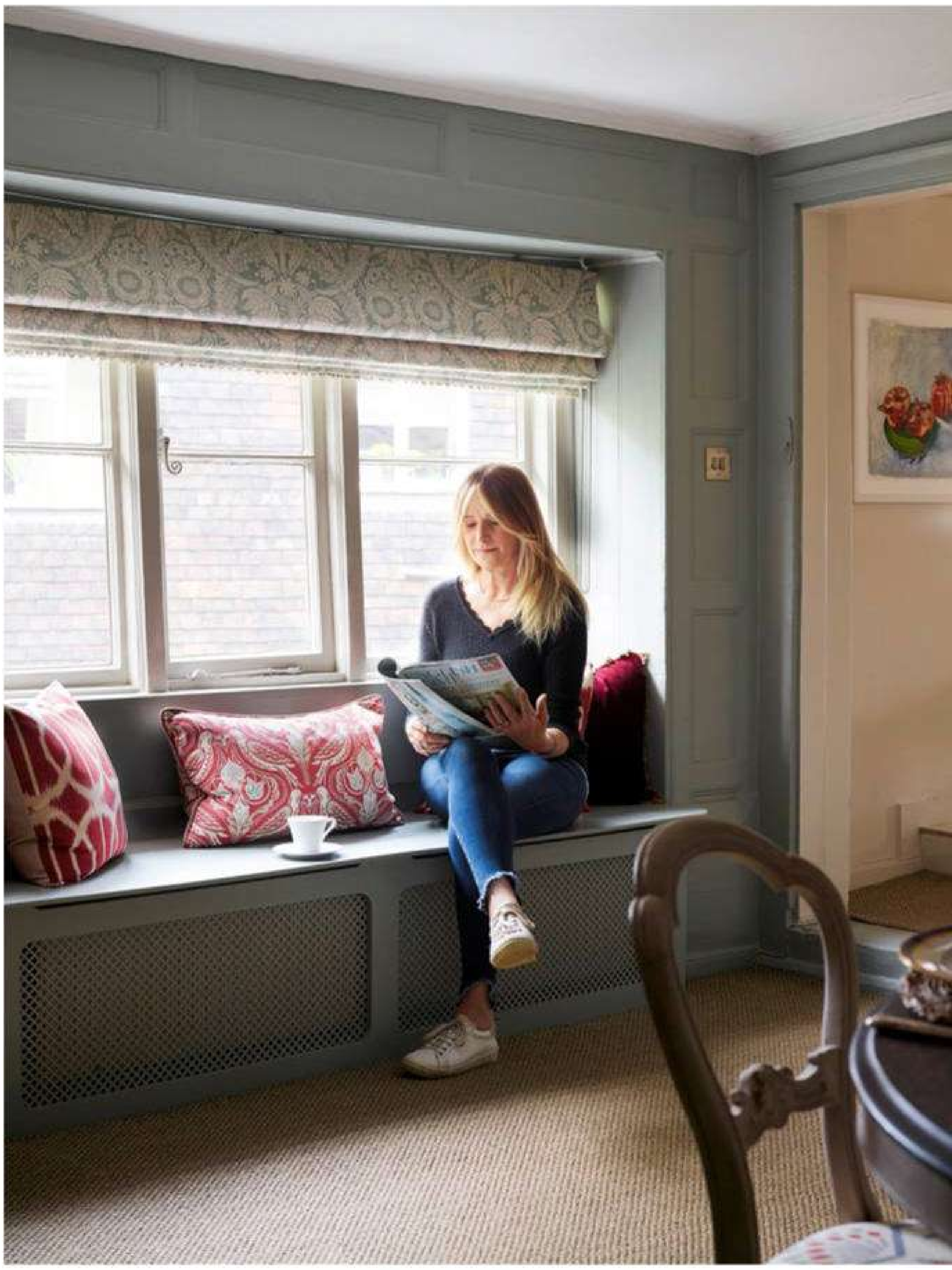
Three years after this harrowing event, when an opportunity arose to buy a unique property in ▶





The circular mahogany table from an auction house in Lewes sets a country-house mood in the entrance to Sarah's home. The taller ginger jar, bought at an auction, sits beside a smaller one from Bone Interiors. To see Sarah Gordon's current collections visit *boneinteriors.com*





'I wanted to leave plenty of old beams exposed and retain as much of the original character as possible'

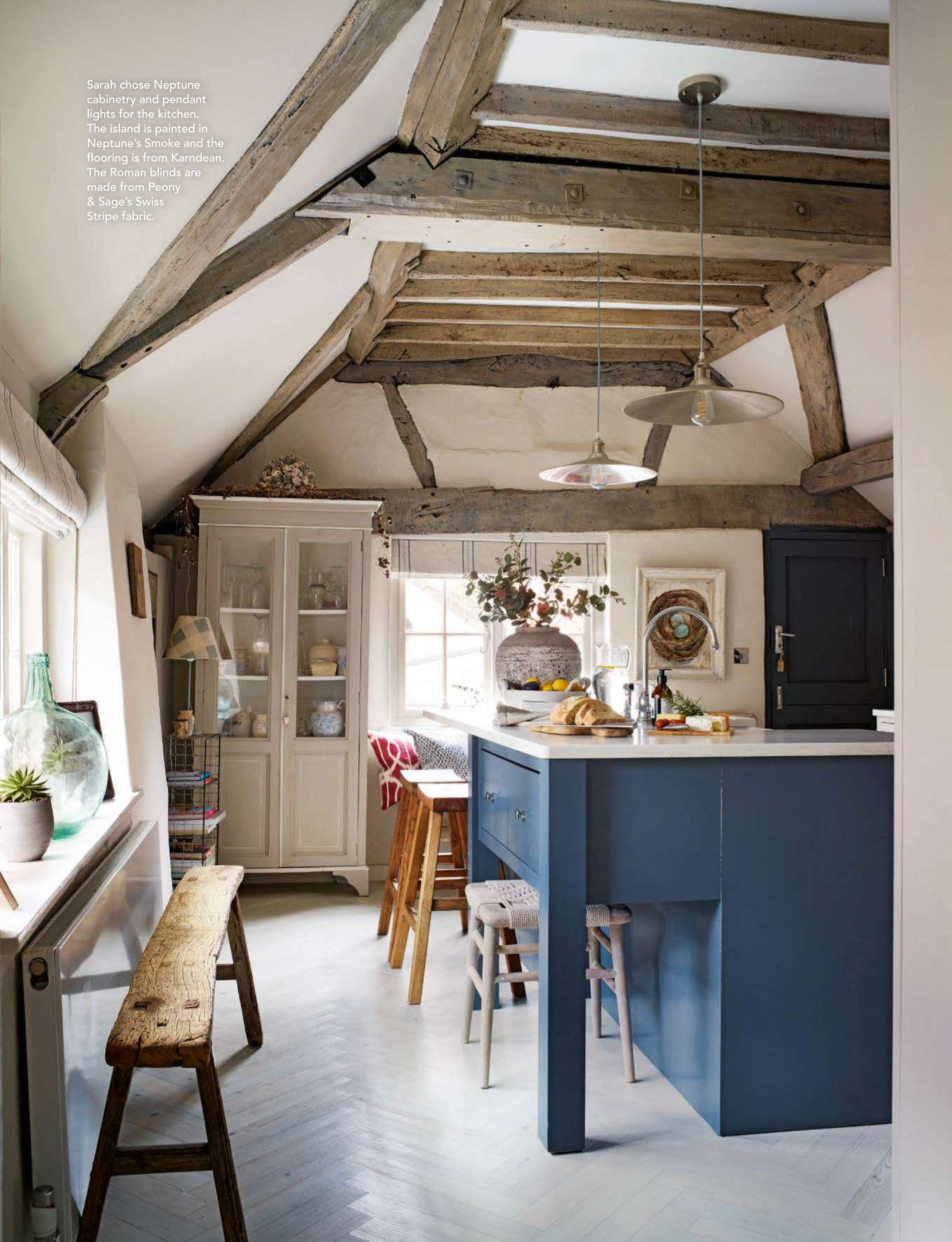
ABOVE The original panelling in the dining room is painted in Moss and the fireplace in Silver Birch, both Neptune. The lampshades on the wall lamps are from Fermoie.

ABOVE RIGHT Sarah created a window seat in the dining room where she can sit and enjoy a leisurely read. The Roman blind is in Lewis & Wood's Hanbury in Verdigris. The velvet cushion behind Sarah is from Susie Watson Designs.

Petworth, Sarah felt this could be the start of a new chapter in her life. "I have always loved this attractive, vibrant town," she says, "and, over the years, had bought several beautiful pieces from the myriad of antique shops in Petworth. So, when the chance came along to buy one of the most prominent shops in the town's Market Square, plus the premises above, I didn't have to think twice. It was serendipitous since I had always liked the idea of living above my own shop."

Sarah, an experienced renovator and interior designer, was unfazed by the fact that her new Grade II listed acquisition would require a major overhaul. "When I went to view the dental surgery, it was dark and the decor was stuck in a 1970s time-warp," she recalls. "There were lots of electric cables and blue carpet tiles everywhere, and the beams had been painted black. I could actually see down to the shop through some of the holes in the floor. Although it felt extremely oppressive, I knew there was vast potential to brighten it up and personalise it to create a welcoming and interesting home. As for the shop, it just required a fresh coat of paint inside and out – and more customers!"

Whilst renting a nearby farmhouse, Sarah applied for permission to change the use of the Petworth property from commercial to residential, and once it was received, in early 2019, the transformation began. The property was rewired, replumbed and a new central heating system installed, before a new kitchen and bathroom were fitted. "I wanted to leave plenty of the old beams exposed and retain as much of the original character as possible," says Sarah. The building work was carried out extremely sensitively, including carefully stripping the beams and giving them a coat of lime-wash for a soft, pared-back look in line with the conservation and planning requirements. ▶



Sarah chose Neptune cabinetry and pendant lights for the kitchen. The island is painted in Neptune's Smoke and the flooring is from Karndean. The Roman blinds are made from Peony & Sage's Swiss Stripe fabric.

Sarah and the builders were thrilled when, upon removing the MDF panelling in the guest bedroom, they discovered an original red-brick wall and a fireplace. "It was such a lovely find," she says, "and one of many memorable moments during the renovation. Unfortunately, I haven't managed to discover much historical information about the property, but I'm told that the room with the vaulted ceiling, where my kitchen is, was once a granary, and that the building is believed to date back to the sixteenth century."

When it came to restoring her home, Sarah was keen to inject a little grandeur, reminiscent of her former period dwelling, and deliberately juxtaposed several oversized pieces and cherished antiques, with finds from Bone Interiors and further afield, to create an element of surprise. "I'm a firm believer that large pieces can look very striking in smaller rooms," says Sarah. "It took a bit of manoeuvering, but the substantial pieces that I treasure fitted up the staircase and look very much at home in their new setting."

With regard to designing the interiors, Sarah was determined to pay homage to the property's past and its location. "My flat is in a rural town, but actually not too far from the coast," she explains. "I wanted to reflect the location with an eclectic mix of styles. For instance, the sitting room has a cosy, cottagey feel, with French and Swedish influences, whilst dramatic seascapes on the walls lend a nod to the nearby West Sussex coastline."

The dining room is somewhat grander and the master bedroom, with its freestanding bath, is quite luxurious." To link the spaces, Sarah chose a palette of mainly green/grey and blue tones, with raspberry accents, incorporating fabrics from Kate Forman, Lewis & Wood and Peony & Sage.

From the outset, Sarah had her heart set on a Neptune kitchen. "As soon as I saw this room, with its vaulted ceiling and gnarled beams, I knew it would be the perfect place for a smart kitchen and pendant lights from Neptune." However, when the designer came to look at the centuries-old space, he was rather bemused. "Nothing in the kitchen is even, and the floor was decidedly wonky," Sarah says. "We decided that the only way forward was to level it before fitting the units, island and pendant lights. The plasterer made a fantastic job of plastering between the beams."

Sarah was thrilled when, in December 2019, she was able to celebrate Christmas with her grown up children, Poppy and George, in her beautifully renovated home. "Living in Petworth is wonderful and has thrown me a lifeline," she enthuses. "I've embraced the town and everyone has made me feel incredibly welcome – there's a wonderful community feel here. Home has always been so important to me and, having tried very hard to turn my life around, I feel that I've found a magical place to live, work and enjoy." ■

ABOVE LEFT A sumptuous quilt from Cox & Cox and tall headboard from Feather & Black adds to the master bedroom's cosseting feel. The panelling is painted in Paint & Paper Library's Lead IV. The Jim Lawrence wall lights are topped with Fermoie shades.

ABOVE The freestanding bath on a raised plinth creates an eye-catching feature in the master bedroom. The bath is from Cranleigh Bathrooms.

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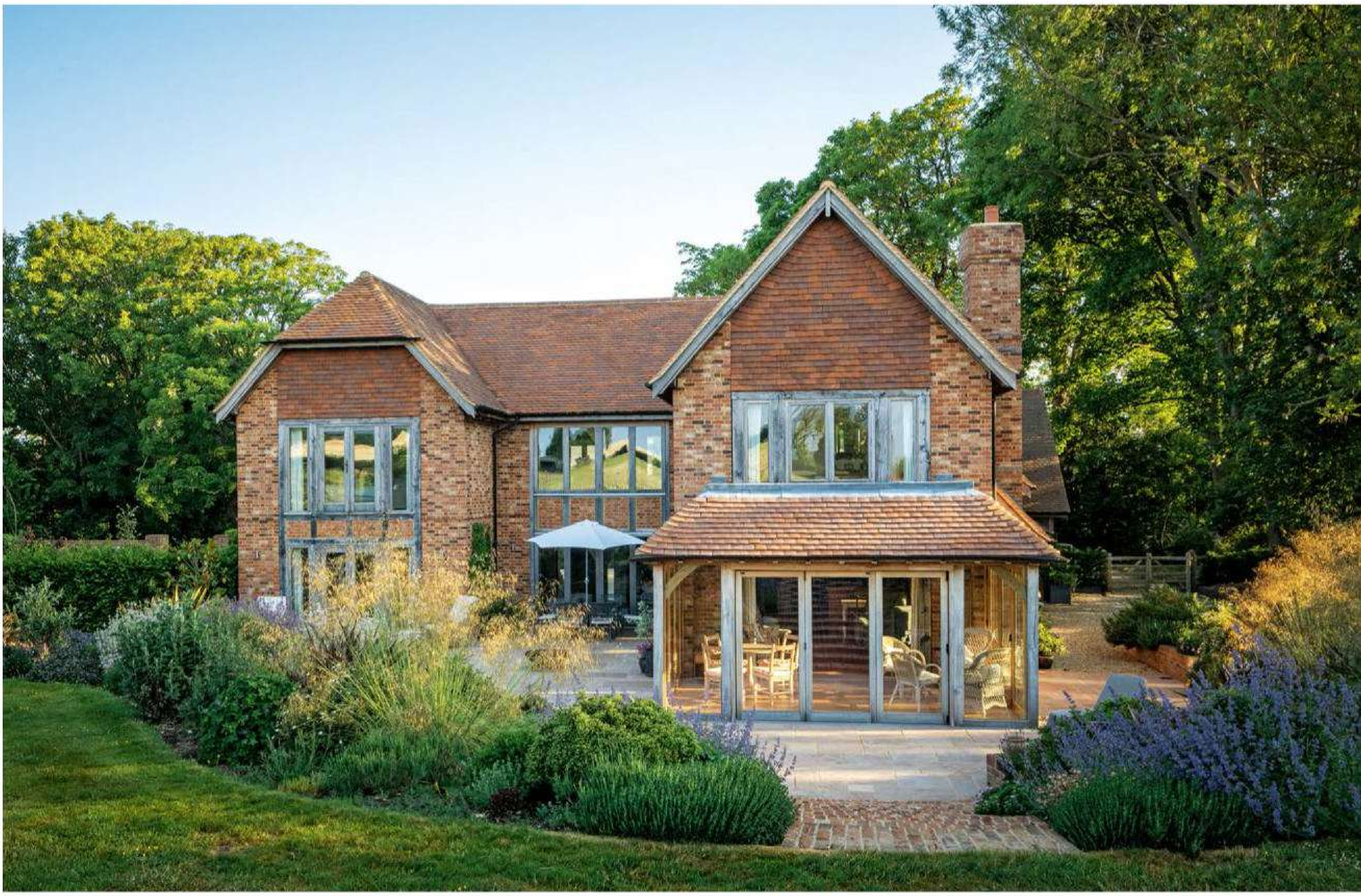


OAKWRIGHTS

SEAMLESS SUNSHINE

Downsizing can be overwhelming, but for Judy Bishop selecting oak-frame experts Oakwrights helped to procure an innovative and authentic build

ABOVE Designed in accordance with strict South Downs National Park guidelines, the house's clay roof tiles and varying brick detailing help it blend into its surroundings and also highlight the oak-framed doors and windows, hinting at the reliable oak frame within. Garden designer Anne Keenan worked with Oakwrights for the necessary surveys.

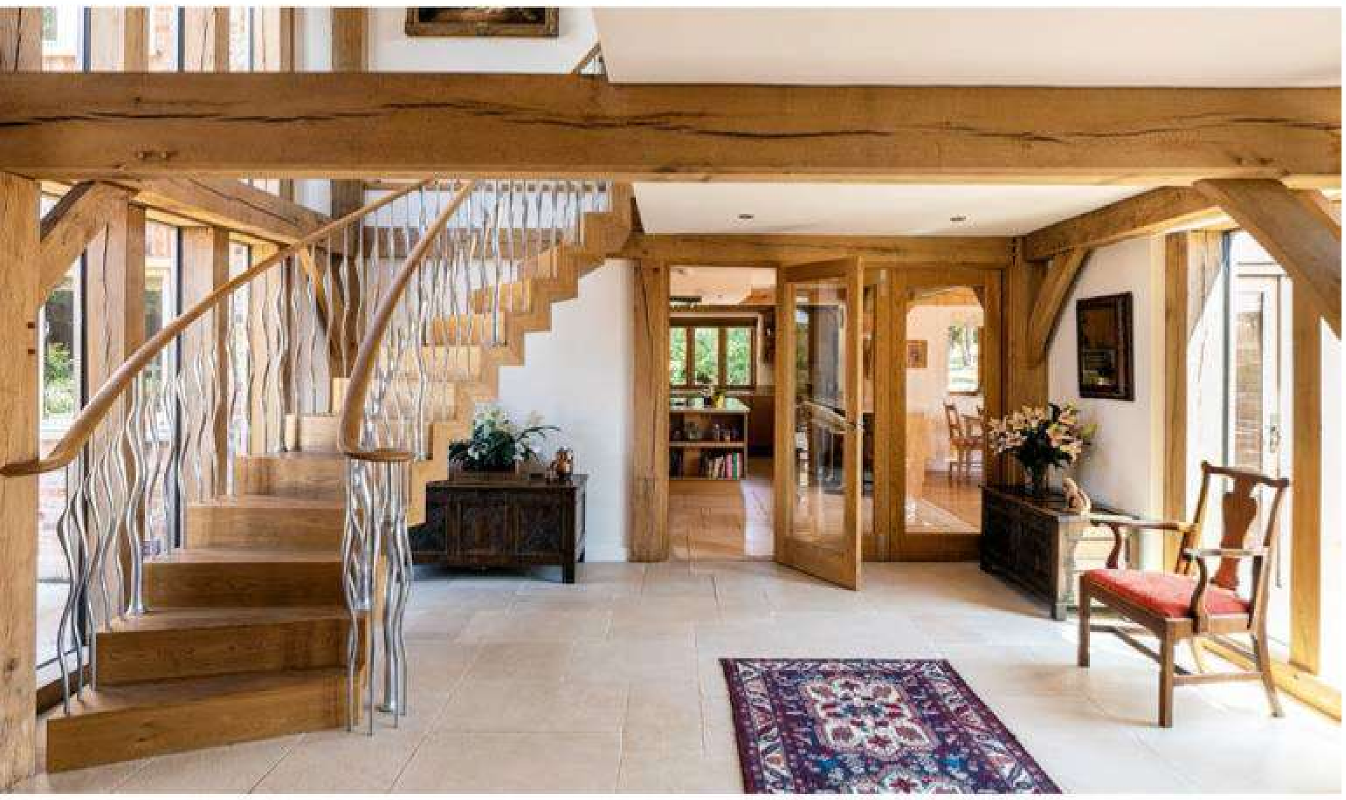
Judy Bishop and her late husband, David, had lived in The Old Rectory in the South Downs for about 30 years, but as their children moved away, they decided the time had come to downsize. Fortunately, they owned some land just over the road from their home, so could build a more manageable house for themselves in an area they already knew.

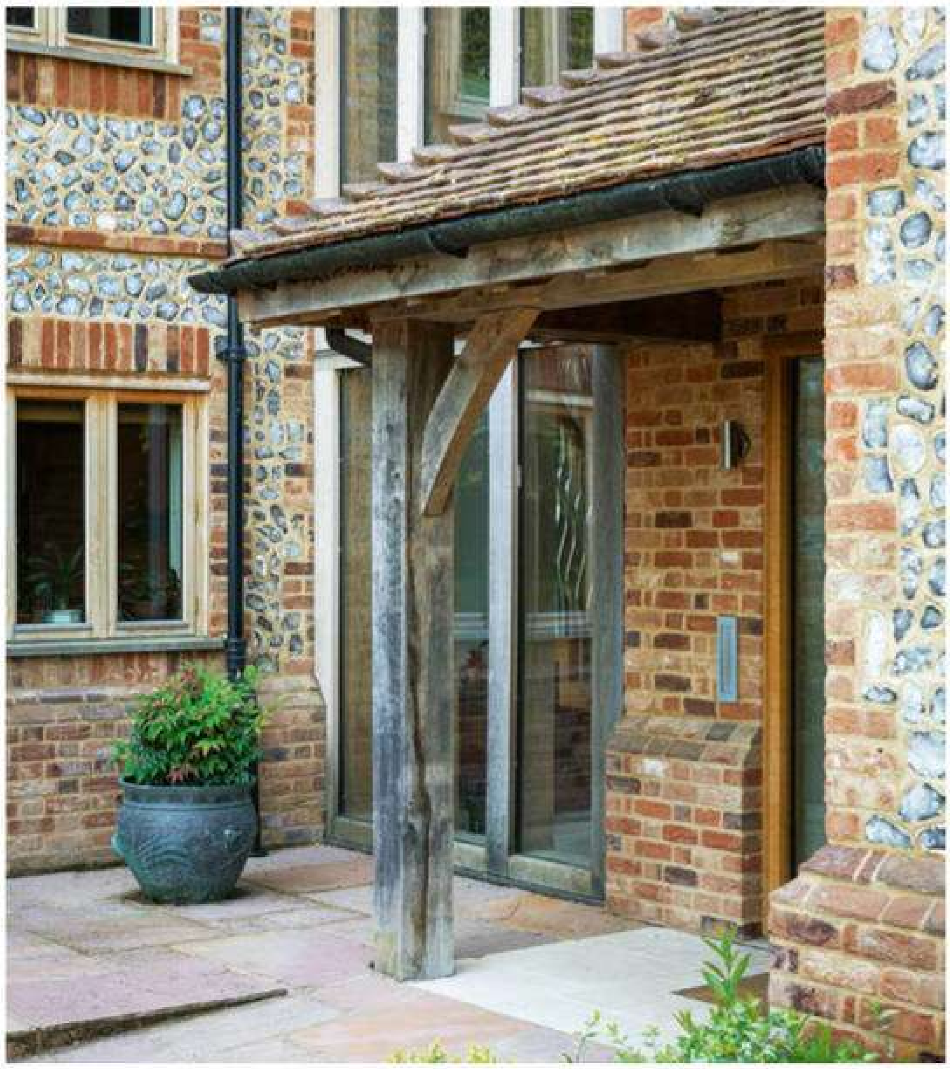
Having discovered Oakwrights through another project she had been involved in, and with a few ideas in her mind already (above all wanting an oak-frame house), Judy knew the company could help realise her vision. One of the oak-frame supplier's architectural designers, John Williams, was tasked with overseeing the project and was distinctly aware of the strict planning permissions due to the build being situated in a conservation area. Unfortunately, by the time the Bishops visited the Oakwrights show home, The Woodhouse, in Hereford, David's health had declined and he had been confined to a wheelchair. This lead to fundamental changes to the house's design and structure to ensure the property was accessible for David, with extra-wide doors, a lift and no change in floor level, inside and out. Alongside this, John listened to Judy's brief of filling the house "with as much sunlight as possible and the feel of no division between inside and the garden". He also adhered to the conservation requirements by cladding the exterior of the property with hanging tiles, flint walls and timber, ensuring it integrated with the local vernacular and neighbouring village houses.

Sadly, David passed away before planning permission was granted, and at Judy's request, Oakwrights sensitively adapted the downtairs layout so that the

FEATURE NELL WHITAKER PHOTOGRAPHS © MARK BOLTON

LEFT Magnificent ceiling height accompanied by French windows infuse Judy's bedroom with air and light.
ABOVE Judy chose Oakwrights for the 'barn-style' look, seen here in the upstairs hallway in the exposed oak beams
RIGHT Floor-to-ceiling windows connect the interior and exterior and maximise the natural light.





bedroom and large walk-in wet room that had been planned for him became a study and sitting room with a gas fire. It took six months to complete the groundwork after planning permission came through and the oak frame was delivered and constructed not long after. Soon the builders and landscapers moved into action and the house was completed a year after the groundwork was laid. The project took five years from conception to moving in.

Explaining the choice of finishes used, John says, "The texture of the flint and the use of brick detailing around the window and door openings and in the external quoins give the house a timeless quality, at one with the quiet village setting where oak sits sympathetically alongside these materials." The oak doors and windows were made by Woodbase Joiners, and an air source heat pump powers the underfloor heating system, all contributing to the property's excellent efficiency and environmental ratings.

For Judy, two features stand out: the hallway, with its double-height glazing and cascading staircase; and the main room with a sunroom on the end, where three sides of bi-fold doors create a seamless boundary with the garden. The open-plan nature of the ground floor works well for Judy, who says, "It's fine for me as a single individual and my dogs, but it's also a great entertaining house."

From meeting and then working with Judy throughout the project, Oakwrights realised her needs and anticipated her wants with its experienced team and sharp foresight. "It was always a pleasure to work with Oakwrights," she says. ■

oakwrights.co.uk

ABOVE LEFT The impressive double-height entance is centred around the floating staircase, designed by Judy together with ZigZag Design Studio.
ABOVE RIGHT Oakwrights used the local stone – flint – on the front facade as a nod to the architectural vernacular of the South Downs National Park, in which the house sits.

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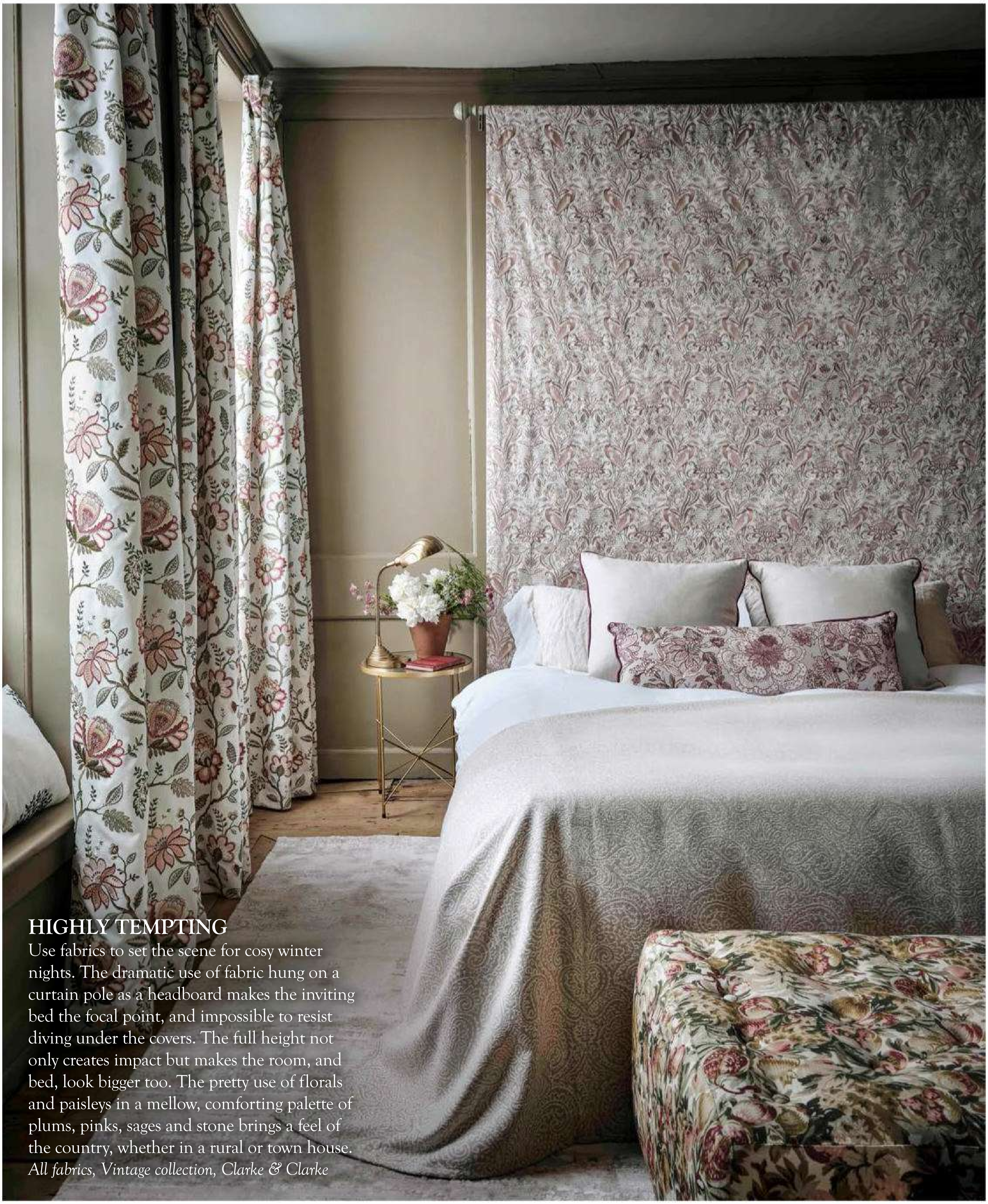
STYLE INSPIRATION

Our special section dedicated to interior design and decorating begins here ›



HIGHLY TEMPTING

Use fabrics to set the scene for cosy winter nights. The dramatic use of fabric hung on a curtain pole as a headboard makes the inviting bed the focal point, and impossible to resist diving under the covers. The full height not only creates impact but makes the room, and bed, look bigger too. The pretty use of florals and paisleys in a mellow, comforting palette of plums, pinks, sages and stone brings a feel of the country, whether in a rural or town house. *All fabrics, Vintage collection, Clarke & Clarke*

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN **PHOTOGRAPH** © DAN DUCHARS

43 DOS AND DON'TS OF
TOWNHOUSE INTERIORS

Interior designers reveal their secrets for beautiful townhouse style that is practical for city living and sympathetic to period features

CAMILLA CLARKE

Creative director at Albion Nord Design Studio

1 DO consider any heritage qualities with your house.

If you have a Georgian or Victorian property, it's important to be sensitive towards these period elements and try and reinstate these heritage architectural features through the interior design. Combining old and new decor schemes helps to create a timeless aesthetic.

Carefully consider a combination of textures and materials that are sympathetic to any listed qualities but still add layers of warmth and interest, making each room feel comfortable and relaxed.

We are passionate about using natural materials such as oaks, linens, wools, silks and sisals. Juxtaposing materials against each other is a great way to stop the space feeling static and is much more exciting to look at.

2 DON'T use quick-fix artwork. A design element to avoid, or perhaps consider in a different light, is the trend for gallery walls. There are many companies providing 'one-stop-shop' services where you can purchase prints and frames from the same vendor to 'get the look.' A far more appealing way to create your own gallery wall is to collect prints you love over time, visiting antique or vintage sellers for limited print runs or little framed oils. This way, your collection will be entirely unique, bringing a sense of your own personality to your home, rather than opting for 'Insta-approved' artworks.

LUCY BARLOW

Creative director and co-founder, Barlow & Barlow

3 DO make the most of a compact space. There are so many clever ways to make the most out of smaller spaces, from bespoke banquettes, to fitted cabinetry and clever storage solutions. It's often little nooks and awkward corners that turn out to be the best spaces, so don't overlook them.

4 DO be patient – not everything needs to be finished all at once. The most successful spaces are those that are layered with interesting fabrics, art, furniture and decorative objects, and finding the right pieces can take time. Buying too many things at once and all from high street shops or from those that adhere to very specific trends, can make for a very impersonal, showroom-style space.

5 DON'T be afraid of making a statement in a small bathroom. We always encourage a bold use of colour and pattern in our schemes, particularly when it comes to a secondary space such as a cloakroom or WC. Make the braver choice, add something a little unexpected and you'll find there is a lot of character in such a small space.

6 DON'T overthink things. The biggest thing we witness is people overthinking their choices, as if picking the wrong lampshade will ruin the house.

ALIDAD

Founder of Alidad and Studio Alidad interior design

7 DO make a home office an enjoyable space; this is more important nowadays than ever. Light is a key element in a home office, whether it's artificial or natural. Where possible, I will always try and place a home office in front of or near a window to allow for natural light and a view to look at for inspiration or some time out from the computer screen. As most things these days are wireless, you can store the additional technical equipment in a beautiful cabinet or armoire.

8 DON'T be absorbed by the functionality of storage. Remember, just because something needs to be practical doesn't mean it needs to be boring. I use a lot of églomisé glass in my work which provides a stunning decorative finish to wardrobe doors. You could also get storage doors to be hand-painted with a bespoke design and add beautiful detailing with ornate handles. ▶

NICKY MUDIE

Founder and director, Violet & George

9 DO make your lifestyle the focus of your home. How do you like to entertain? How many people do you need to accommodate for meals regularly or occasionally? How can you make your space work with these numbers? When it comes to guests staying over regularly, what are their needs? Yes, your home is your castle, but it is also somewhere you want to be able to entertain effortlessly, a space that you feel comfortable welcoming your guests into. There is nothing worse than feeling uncomfortable in your own home! Think about how the spaces need to flex around you, your family and your social life and the areas will start to make sense to you in terms of layout.

10 DO create a special, personal place. Conversely, you need to focus on your time relaxing in your home. When walking around a new space I am always drawn to the spot with the best light and the best view; I love to read and need a spot with lots of natural light and a link to the outside to relax into. This spot should then have an incredibly comfortable reading chair/s in it with good head and neck support for reading; a wing back chair or a sofa with neck support is ideal. Natural light should be supported by fantastic, directional reading lights.

LOUISE BRADLEY

Interior designer and founder of Louise Bradley

11 DON'T rely on overhead lighting as your main source of lighting. Overhead lighting has one purpose only – to be able to see to clean. Your main lighting should come from statement pendant lights, wall lights, table lights and floor lights. All on dimmer switches to enable you to play with the mood depending on the time of the day – dim down as the natural light levels go down. Zico Lighting does some fantastic amber glass LED filament light bulbs which give off the same warm light as a traditional incandescent light bulbs, but which are better for the environment. They are more expensive but last a significant length of time.

12 DON'T cut off the outside world. I recently stayed in a rental house in Kent with my family. The location was fantastic, but you felt trapped. Without a sense of what was going on in the outside world, the house felt oppressive. There should be a sense of being comfortably supported by your home, not imprisoned. Make the most of the best views and where you are overlooked by neighbours or have less appealing views, ensure you disguise these windows with privacy blinds.

13 **DO expand your space.** City townhouses are known for their narrow rooms with high ceilings. Expand your space and balance the proportions using mirrors – they can be grouped together to create a trick of the eye – or inbuilt to joinery to conceal a walk-in wardrobe or an en-suite bathroom.

14 **DO mix antiques with new pieces to achieve an eclectic look.** Including antiques within your home will also reduce the environmental impact of your project, especially when sourcing the items within your local neighbourhood. A mix of antique and contemporary is also a nod to the property's period and adds a historical layer, whilst the modern aspects of underfloor heating allow one to enjoy all of the functional aspects of modern luxury comforts.

15 **DO open up the space.** Opt for a light-filled open space to create harmony in your interiors and maximise the natural light, always. Whilst opening up your room, you can still retain zones for certain activities or times of the day – this can be achieved by grouping furniture or dividing the space with versatile pieces of furniture such an ottoman or double-sided cabinet.

16 **DO add personal touches.** A house is not a home unless it reflects your personality. Once you have carefully layered your interiors with colours, textures and patterns, it's time to make it about you. Bring to the forefront your most treasured possessions, favourite books – all the items that evoke positive emotions and will create an atmosphere of balance and harmony in your home.

17 **DO consider the architecture individually.** Interior architecture is the first layer of your home, and the interior design scheme is grown from there. It is important to always consider townhouses individually. They may look very similar from the outside but internally each home is unique, with a different aspect, varying natural light and orientation. It's always good to research the period of your property and bring to the forefront the elements that resonate with you the most and contemporise other elements of the design.

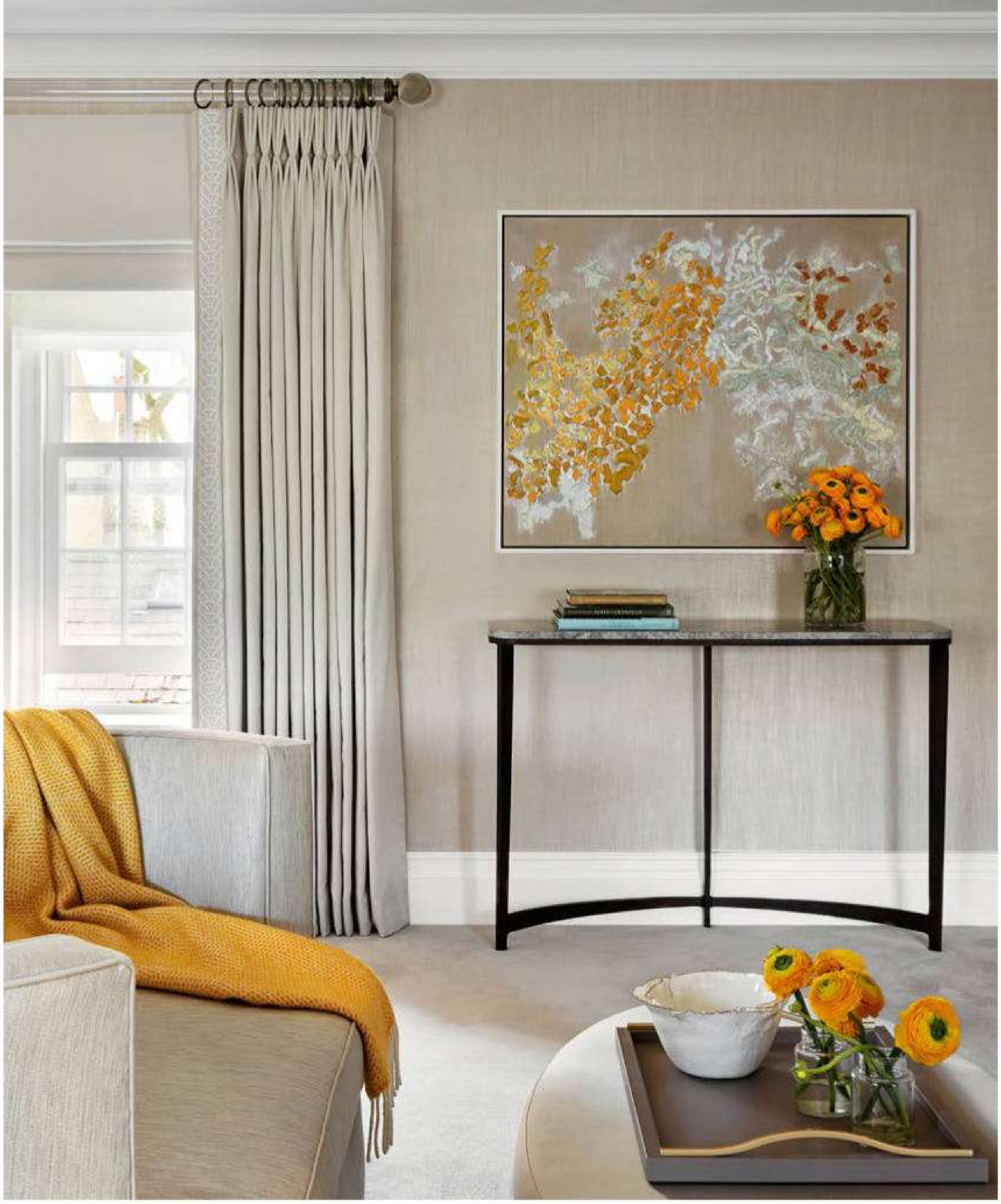
18 **DON'T forget to layer the lighting.** Lighting is key to creating the desired ambience in a space and being able to create a distinct atmosphere throughout the day. Opt for a combination of decorative chandeliers, wall lights and table and floor lamps to create a varied scheme. It's an easy way of ensuring you have many functional lighting options in your space too.

19 **DON'T be afraid to shine.** Reflective or metallic surfaces combined with glass chandeliers will lift any room, through the reflection of natural light. Paired with more traditional period interiors, this will help you achieve the balanced classic-contemporary look.

20 **DON'T overpower your interiors with clashing colours and textures.** Opt for muted shades and subtle textures as the base of your interior, and build them up layer by layer, like an artist would work with an oil painting. Matching delicate textures together will add refinement to your interiors, without being too overpowering. ▶

KATHARINE POOLEY

International designer and founder of Katharine Pooley



21 **DO be bold in smaller rooms.** In an urban period property bedrooms can often be smaller than in the country, but don't think that this means your fabric and accessory choices should be safer or more neutral in hue or pattern. I find the opposite to be the case. For a recent townhouse bedroom (*right*), introducing a canary yellow bedspread and throws, and a large-scale yellow painting instantly revitalised the space and created a memorably beautiful room. Bright yellow ranunculus arranged in little vases also add a joyful dash of colour.

22 **DO add details and flair with passementerie.** My number one tip for an urban property is to ensure you keep trims at the heart of your bedroom scheme. In a lighter more tonal design they add much-needed interest and detail. I find my favourite curtain leading edges and trims and ribbons for cushions at Victoria Bain, Samuel & Sons and Frette.

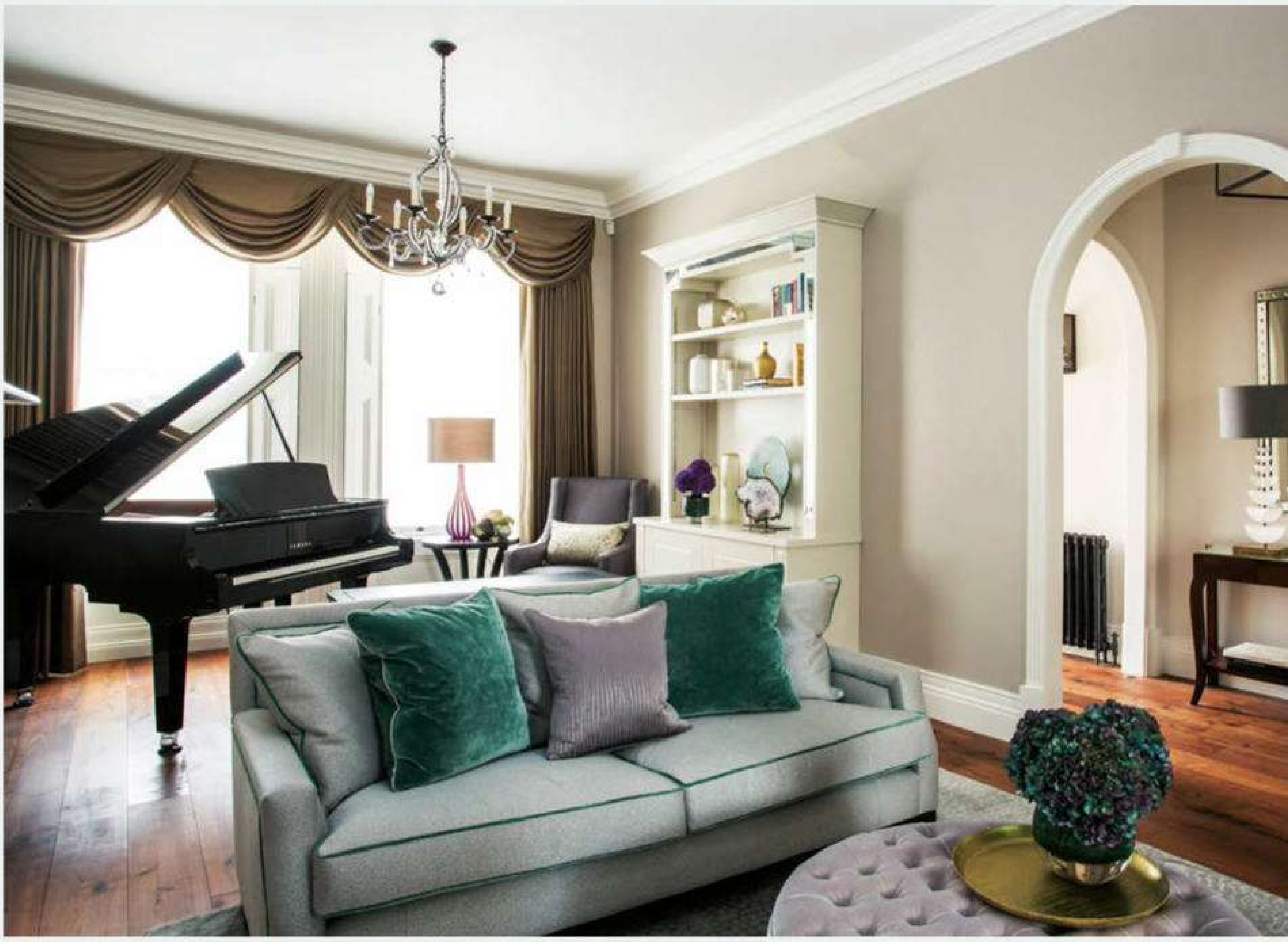
23 **DO always try to include some pattern** or detailing to your hallway floor. This is usually the first thing to greet guests so why not make a statement and set the tone for the rest of your home.

24 **DO be intelligent with your kitchen storage** to try to maximise a spacious feel; hidden cupboards work really well and should be embraced whenever possible. For a recent townhouse project, I had the cornice built forward and designed the storage cupboards to run all the way up to the ceiling. We then added mouldings and panelling to disguise the cupboards within the wall, it looks terrifically elegant and is such a chic backdrop to a contemporary kitchen island.

25 **DON'T forget that in a hallway, antiques add interest** and personality to even the most neutral or contemporary design. Introducing a few antiques will also attractively reference the architectural style of the building facade.

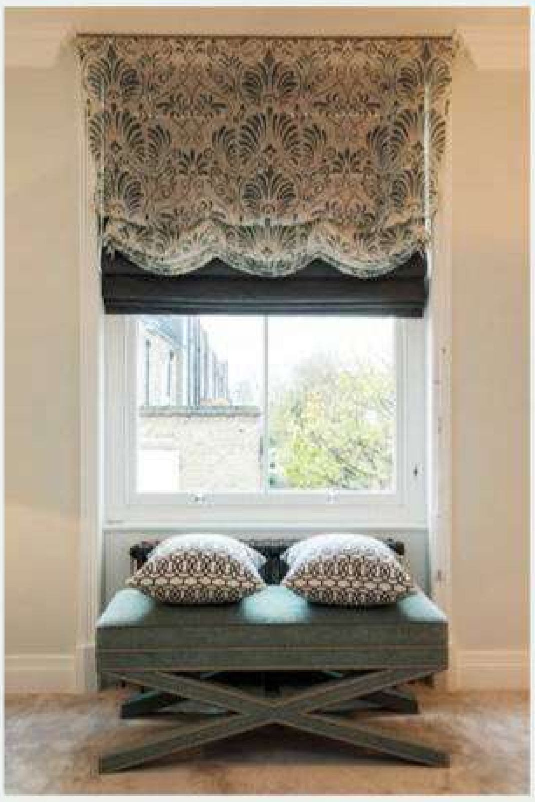
26 **DON'T shy away from expensive papers.** I am naturally drawn to hand-painted and patterned wallpapers for bedrooms. If large quantities of pattern terrify you, don't think you can't introduce the beautiful work by de Gournay and Fromental in smaller sections. Rather than doing the entire room, I often introduce two framed artwork panels either side of the bed. This works particularly well with chinoiserie designs and if you pick a paper with hand-embroidered detailing or gilt metallic touches the bedside table lamps will showcase this to maximum effect.

27 **DON'T forget to add feature pendants** over an island. Currently I'm drawn to bronze fittings, they add interest and are the perfect addition to lift a neutral scheme.



JULIETTE WRIGHT & NATALIE STEPHENSON
Directors, Stephenson Wright

29 DO dress windows with style and practicality in mind. Sash windows lend themselves beautifully to blinds. Consider layering window treatments in interesting ways for added texture and to give you options depending on the time of day. Here, (*right*) a 'London blind' in a Designers Guild sheer fabric sits outside the window's reveal. This softens a heavier linen blackout Roman blind inside the reveal.



28 DO always include a mirror and linear sculptural console in the hall. They don't need to be big, and a half-moon design will fit most hallways. When dressed with an abundance of orchids in a thoughtfully chosen pot, or flowers, this gives the perfect focal point to draw people into your home.

30 DON'T miss an opportunity to use every inch of floorspace in a townhouse. A relaxing reading area on an extended half-landing could become your favourite part of the house. Not only does it create a soft viewpoint from the downstairs hallway, but it really does make a useful area out of a compact space. Consider the fabrics you use and lean towards soft mohair velvets and curtain fabrics which drape beautifully. You could also use a double-width sheer for extra fullness, and to allow natural light to flood in.

31 DON'T close off hallways. Hallways don't always need to be closed off to drawing rooms and can successfully form part of the flow of a ground floor in townhouse and increase the feeling of space. An elegant archway (*as above*) can lead into a drawing room. For cohesive flow, the same floor finish should extend throughout any adjoining areas for a visual link. Consider adding large antique mirrors or mirrored furniture in key places to increase the feeling of light and offer interesting reflections. ▶

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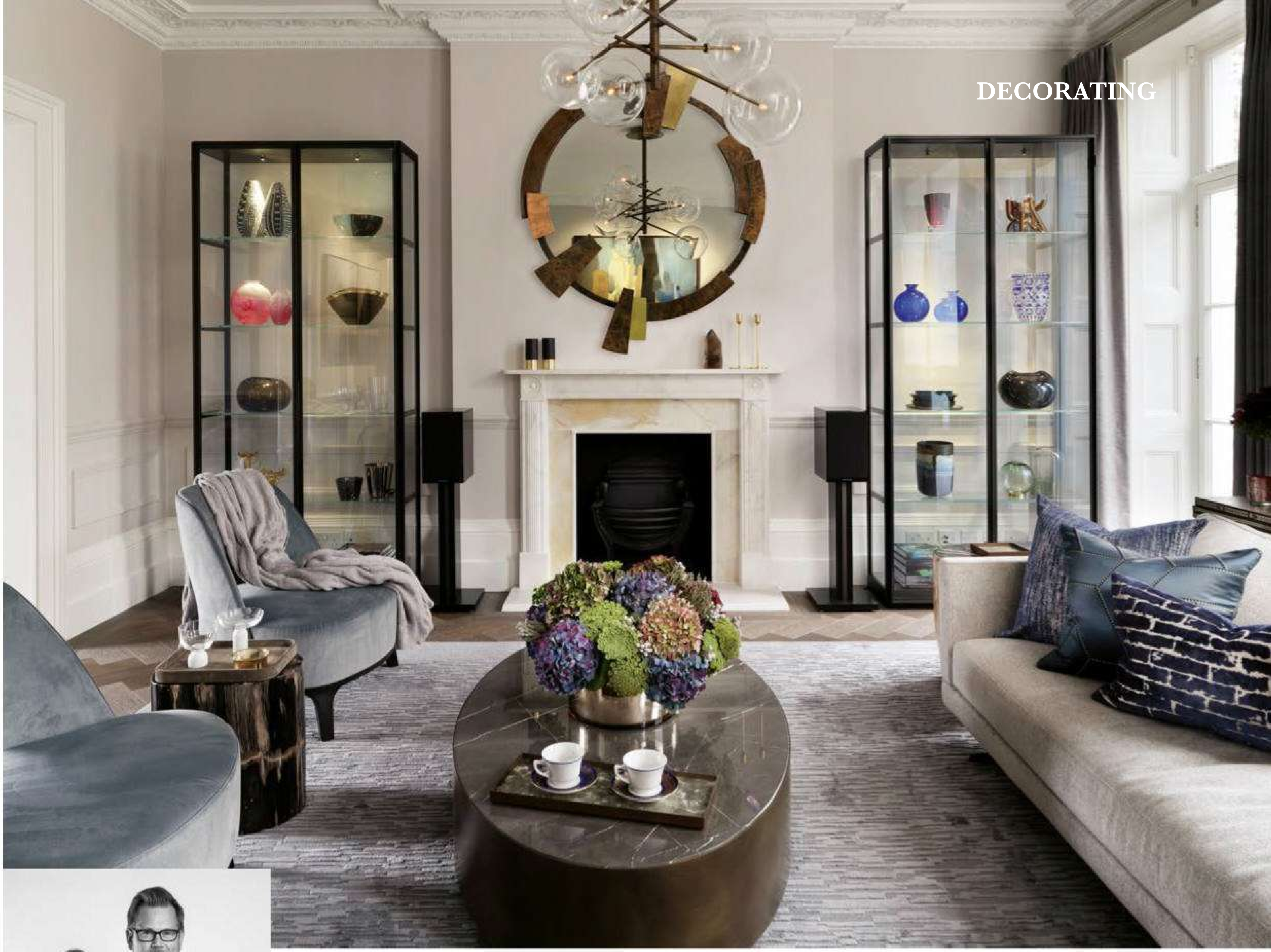

STAFFAN & MONIQUE TOLLGARD

Co-founders, Tollgard Design Group

32 DO make an entrance. Whilst we are absorbed by the fast pace of city life, it's important to feel a sense of escape once you step through the front door. To leave the worries of the day behind, we encourage you to create an entrance where you can take a moment to find balance in your everyday.

Rituals like taking off your shoes, sitting down on a beautiful bench and looking up to find meaningful artwork on the walls are all examples of how this anchoring space can set the tone for your entire home.

33 DO make spaces work harder. Space is always in short supply and high demand in cities, which makes it paramount to make your spaces work hard for you. We heatmap clients' existing homes to see which spaces are over or under used and then make sure this functional map is more logically expressed in the new layouts.

Taking a multi-function approach to your rooms can help you to make better use of your spaces too. Dining rooms make for great studies, whilst a family room can transform into a formal reception space with effective storage and audiovisual solutions.

34 DON'T just collate, curate. Our homes say so much about us: the unique pieces gathered within them are filled with powerful memories and meaning, and root our identity into a new architecture and environment.

Rather than collating (hoarding) everything and filling every available space with wall-to-wall joinery, we help our clients to curate a collection of pieces that work in harmony with each other and their surroundings and give them the considered visibility to be enjoyed. Be brave and shed as much as you can, keeping only what brings you joy and what's relevant in this current chapter of your life. Find the forever pieces – not the clutter accumulated whilst you weren't paying attention. Then make the pieces that you cherish really sing.

35 DON'T think like the Victorians. We've come a long way from the rigid Victorians of London and their compact townhouses. Whilst many properties in the city are hundreds of years old, we shouldn't be afraid to create flexible homes that can answer the questions of living that we face today. The way we live has changed and we need flexible homes with spaces that can adapt and transform, encompassing open-plan vistas as well as private refuges. ▶

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NICOLE SALVESEN & MARY GRAHAM

Co-founders, Salvesen Graham Interior Design

36 DO add as much storage as possible. To keep a townhouse functioning, you need to have space to put everything. Typically, in our townhouse projects, we may not have space for various additional utilitarian rooms for our clients to squirrel away their belongings. We overcome this with an intelligent floorplan, adding utility space or pantries and useful linen cupboards. Where this isn't possible, design and build in storage around your specific needs. Don't, for example, build endless bookshelves if you have a limited collection of books.

37 DON'T be afraid to use multiple layers of texture and pattern in your scheme. It is important to remember that a townhouse can be cosy and comfortable too. In combination with this, consider including a tailored detail like a smart trimming or a simpler, pared-back curtain heading to suit the typical scale of a townhouse.

38 DON'T allow your space to become too cluttered. Where space is often more limited in a townhouse, it can be more important than ever to pare things back a bit. This doesn't necessarily mean limited colour and pattern or that you can't include a trimming or frilly edge, but do keep things a little more ordered. Symmetry is your friend in a townhouse and can help to keep a space looking pleasing to the eye, even if it is smaller and holding more furniture.

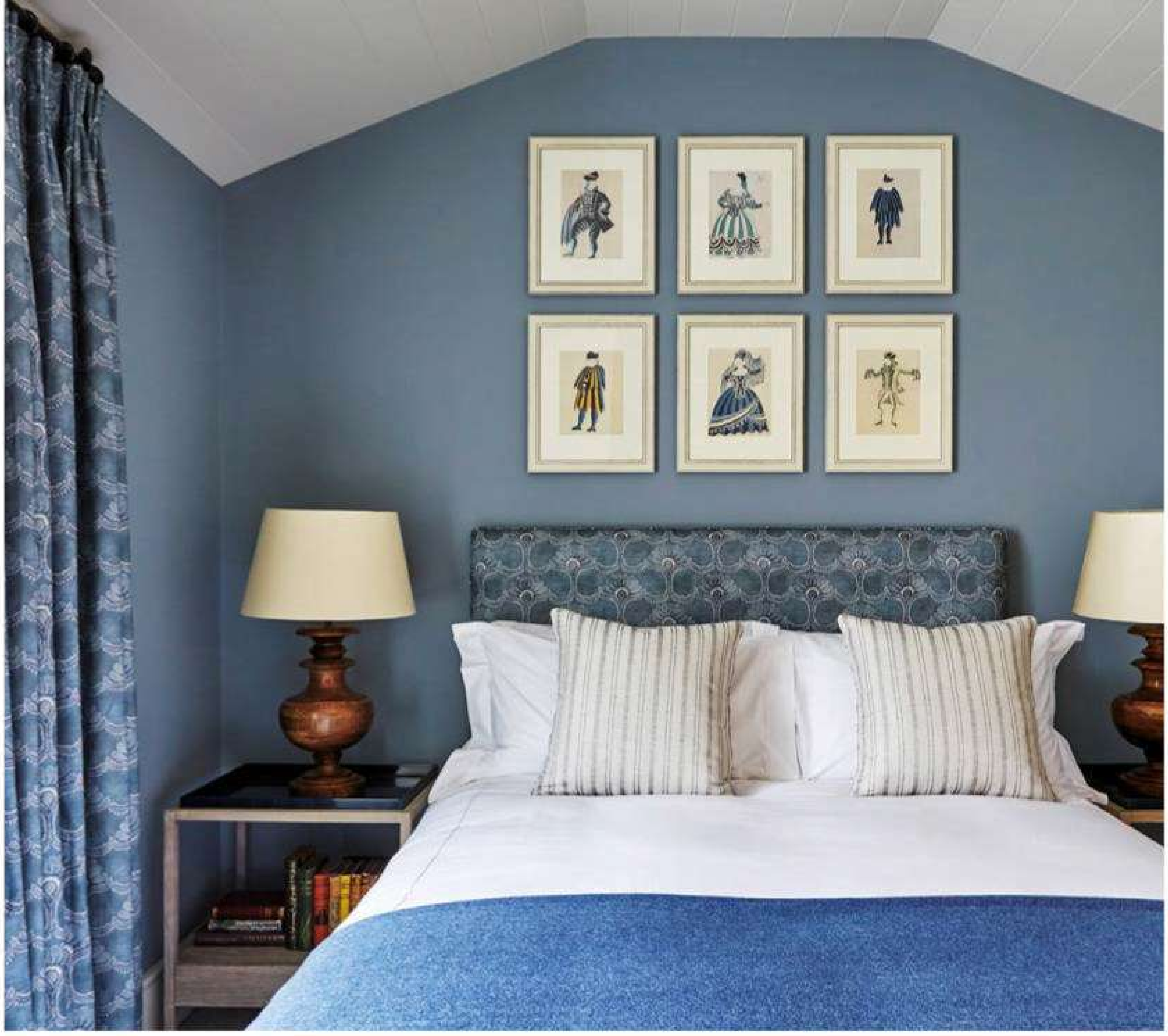
39 DON'T forget to use quality and timeless details if you want your home to have longevity. Sometimes the joy of a townhouse is you don't need to be such a slave to the history of the building. In a more modern building, you can add details such as panelling, or a trimming around the room where there might not be a cornice. If the detail doesn't exist in the fabric of the building itself, then incorporate it into design details such as trimming the leading edge of a curtain, or a skirt on a chair. ▶

EMILY TODHUNTER

Co-founder, Todhunter Earle Interiors

40 DO use every inch available to maximise the space in the house. I think it's more important to get usable space in the attic areas, where are you have light and views, than to spend money on digging a basement. We have done some very successful bedrooms in rooms with sloping ceilings that you might have thought were unusable. It often means applying for permission for a dormer window or a skylight, but it's worth every ounce of effort to get these permissions. You often find yourself faced with a ceiling that slopes in one direction. It's much prettier to put a bed in an alcove with a double pitch. So, if necessary, create that alcove.

41 DO try to maximise the feeling of width of the house. Most townhouses are narrower than you would like them to be. This often means you have a long narrow entrance hall with stairs ahead and a double room on one or other side with two fireplaces. The layout is a difficult one. If possible, try to reorganise the house to get one really good room spanning the width of the house and preferably overlooking the back garden.



42 DON'T build a basement without enough ceiling height, natural light or fresh air. There's nothing worse than a dark depressing basement which smells musty and has cost a fortune! Introduce light wells as much as possible and make them attractive.

43 DON'T underestimate what will make family life easier. It is surprising how stressful the school run can be if you haven't got a practical kitchen, easily accessible storage for school bags, a family bathroom or loo nearby. You may want to make the back door a nicer area than you had previously thought. You don't want to be tripping over bins and old bikes when you're in a rush to get children off to school. ■

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN **PHOTOGRAPHS** P77 BARLOW & BARLOW (PORTRAIT) © HARRY CROWDER, (INTERIORS) © JONATHAN BOND; ALIDAD (PORTRAIT) © NIC BARLOW, (INTERIORS) © JAMES MCDONALD. P78 VIOLET & GEORGE (INTERIORS) © SARAH HOGAN. P79 LOUISE BRADLEY (ALL) © RAY MAIN. P80 KATHARINE POOLEY (INTERIORS) © JAMES MCDONALD. P83 TOLLGARD (INTERIORS) © RICHARD GOODING. P85 SALVESEN GRAHAM (PORTRAIT) © SIMON BROWN, (BED/BOOKSHELVES) © EMMA LEWIS, (BED/CHAIR) © ASTRID TEMPLIER. P86 TODHUNTER EARLE (PORTRAIT) © NICK HARVEY / SHUTTERSTOCK, (BEDROOM & HALLWAY WITH CUPBOARDS) © RAY MAIN

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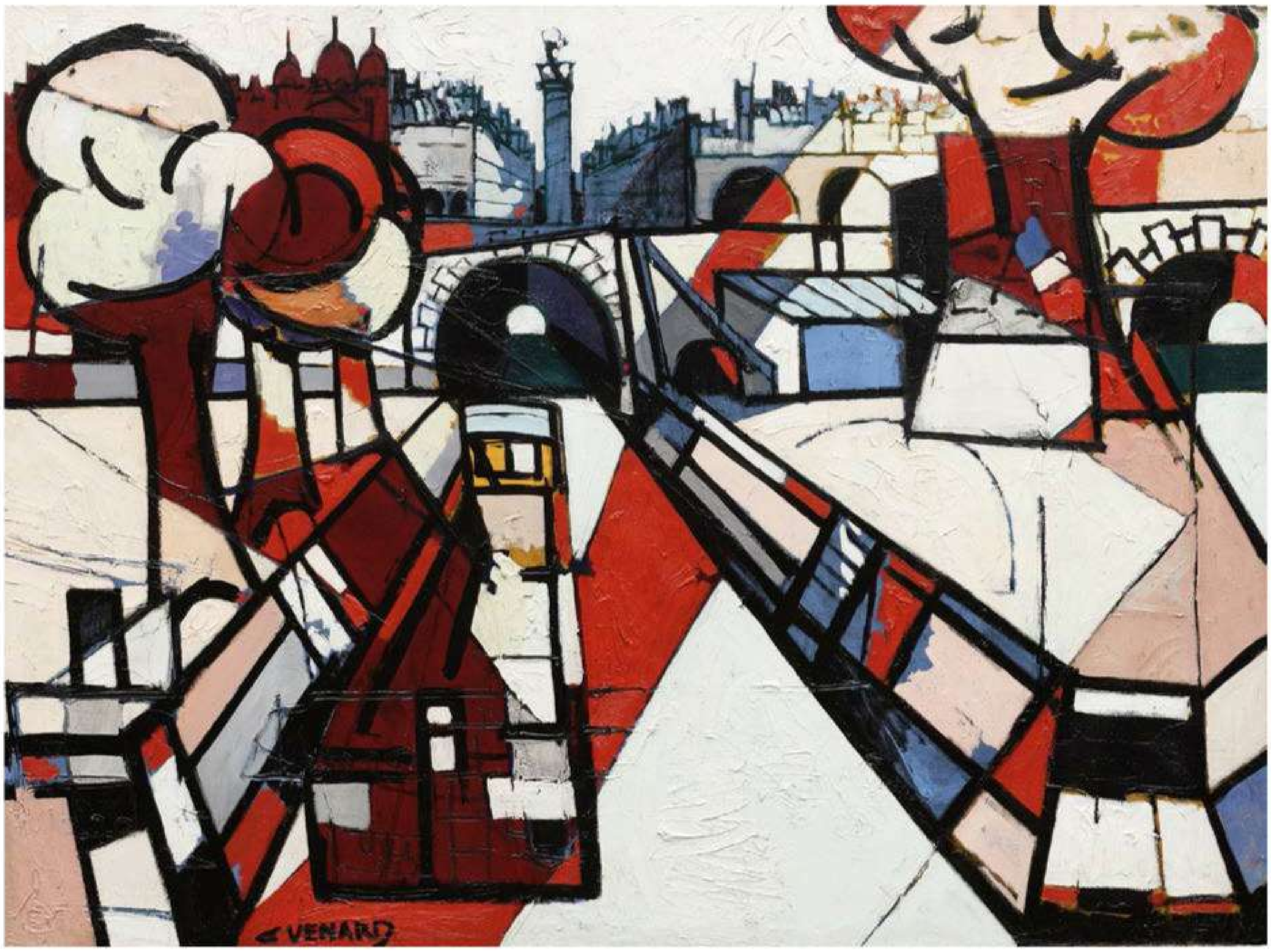
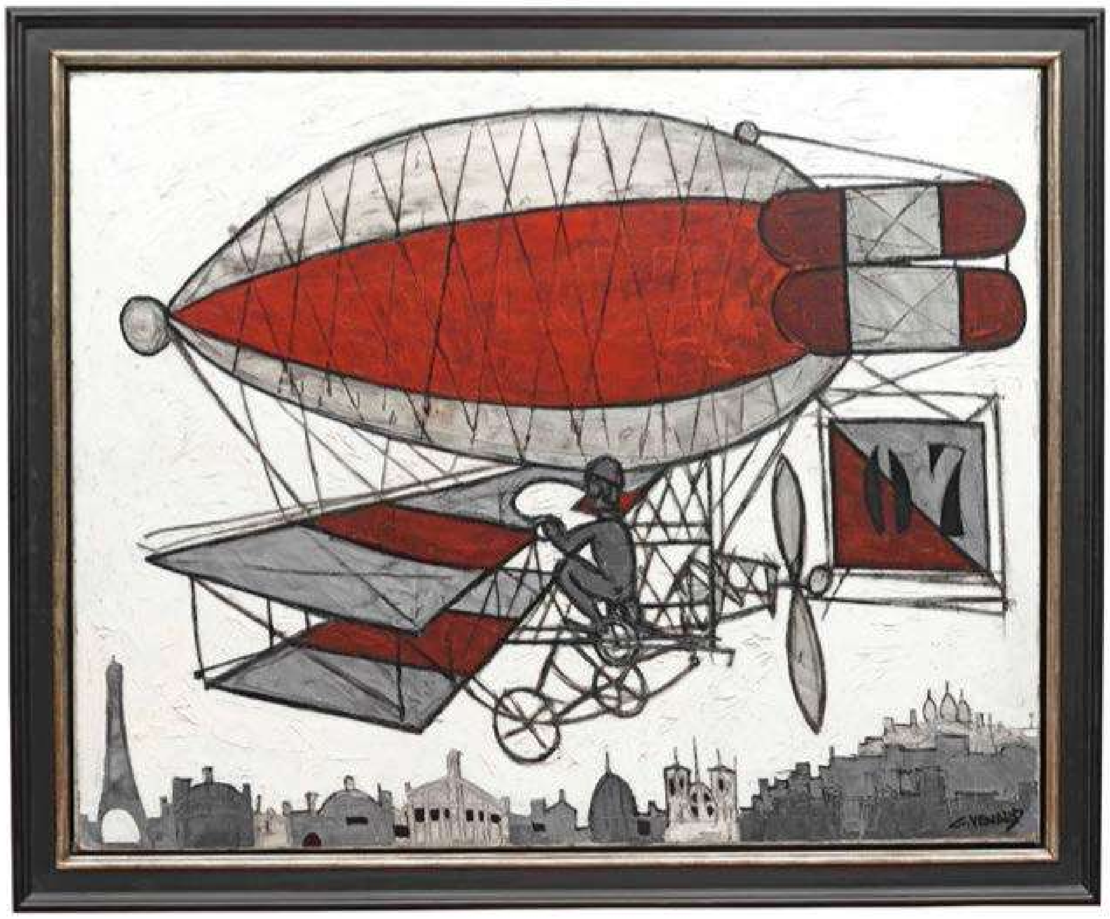


RIGHT The vibrant colours and asymmetric design of Venard's *Le Tunnel* (97cm x 130cm) make it a striking addition to any room.
BELOW One of Venard's favourite subjects was biplanes, as seen in the scale of this impressive piece, *No 7 Red Biplane*, which stands at 130cm x 160cm.

CALLAGHANS OF SHREWSBURY

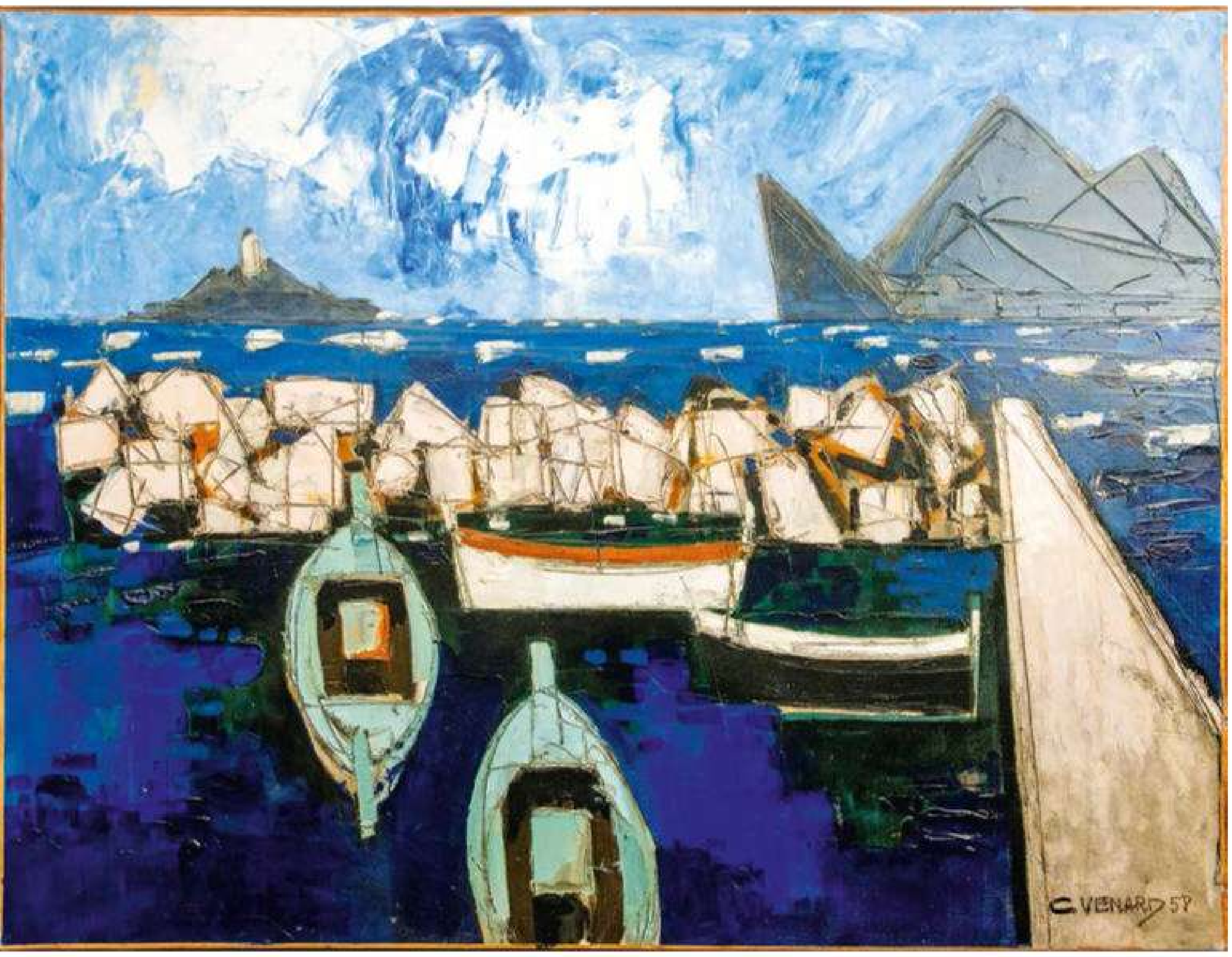
PICTURE PERFECT

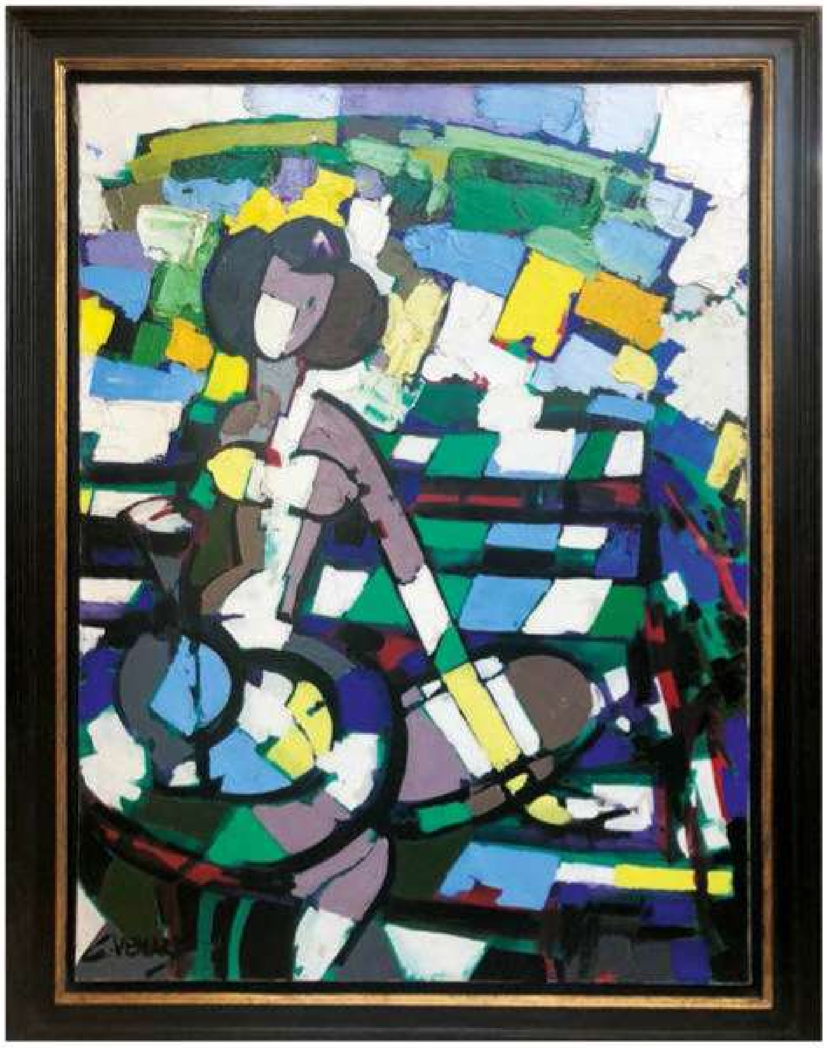
The twentieth-century French artist Claude Venard is proving a particular area of interest, finds this gallery with an international reputation in the world of art

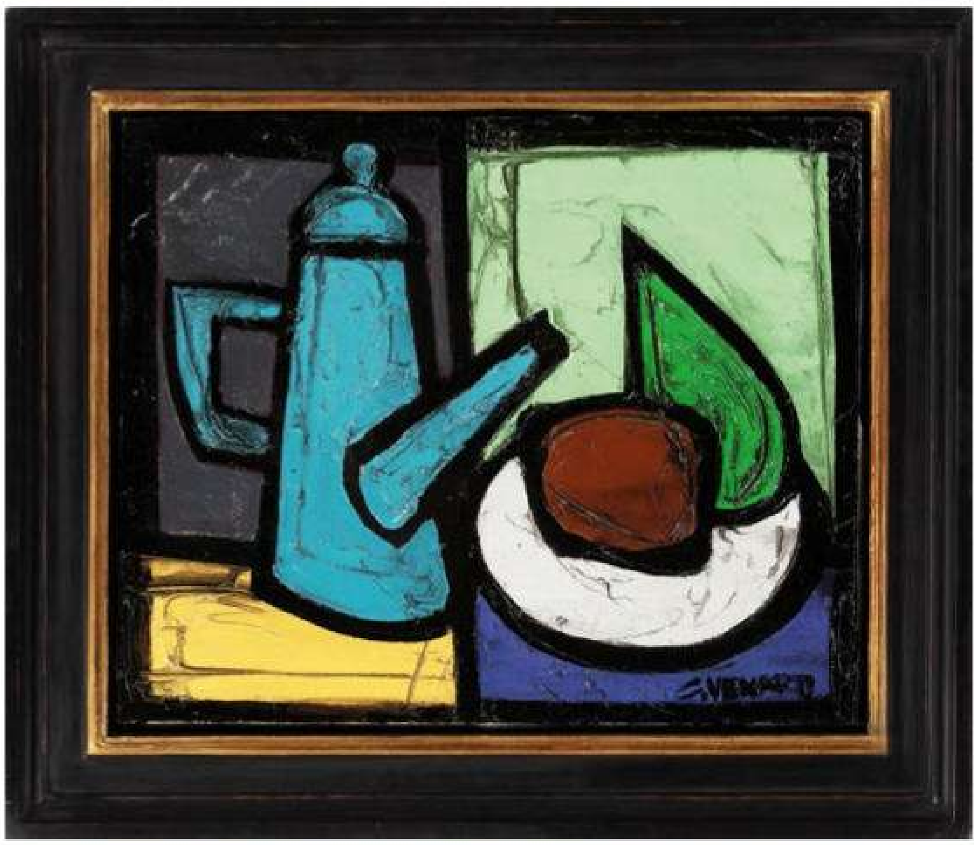


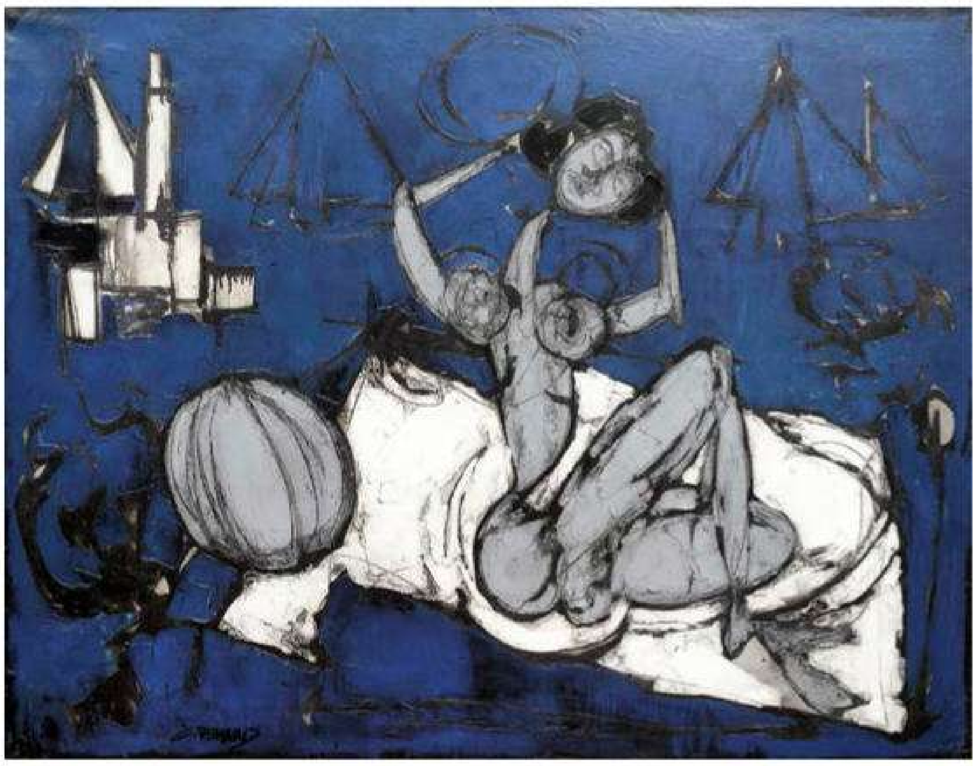
As the celebrated artist Salvador Dalí once said, "a true artist is not one who is inspired but one who inspires others." This, of course, is the great joy of art, as Stella Callaghan, (who along with her husband Dan owns the Fine Art gallery Callaghans of Shrewsbury) can attest. "We always recommend our clients choose works they fall in love with and feel inspired by. The 'pop-off-the-wall pieces' you could get lost in every day," she says.

There is no doubt Stella and Dan Callaghan know a thing or two about art, having garnered themselves an outstanding reputation both in the UK and across the world during their gallery's 35-year history. The company specialises in European nineteenth- and twentieth-century oils and watercolours – particularly those by Antoine Bouvard Snr, Marcel Dyf, Eugene Galien-Laloue and Claude Venard – as well as contemporary sculpture and early twentieth-century Carlo Bugatti furniture.









So, when it comes to building an art collection, where should people start? As Stella says, it is best to follow the heart when it comes to art. “Once we know our client and they know us, we can curate their collections together. But we always recommend buying pieces that give you pleasure, that you want to keep looking at,” she says.

As such, Stella would not recommend following artistic trends, but striking out on one’s own with a bit of advice from an art dealer. “We always tell our clients to buy the best pieces they can afford and to avoid buying multiple pieces that they only like rather than adore,” she says. “That said, if you’re buying en masse for a space like an office, you don’t need to be so emotionally invested.”

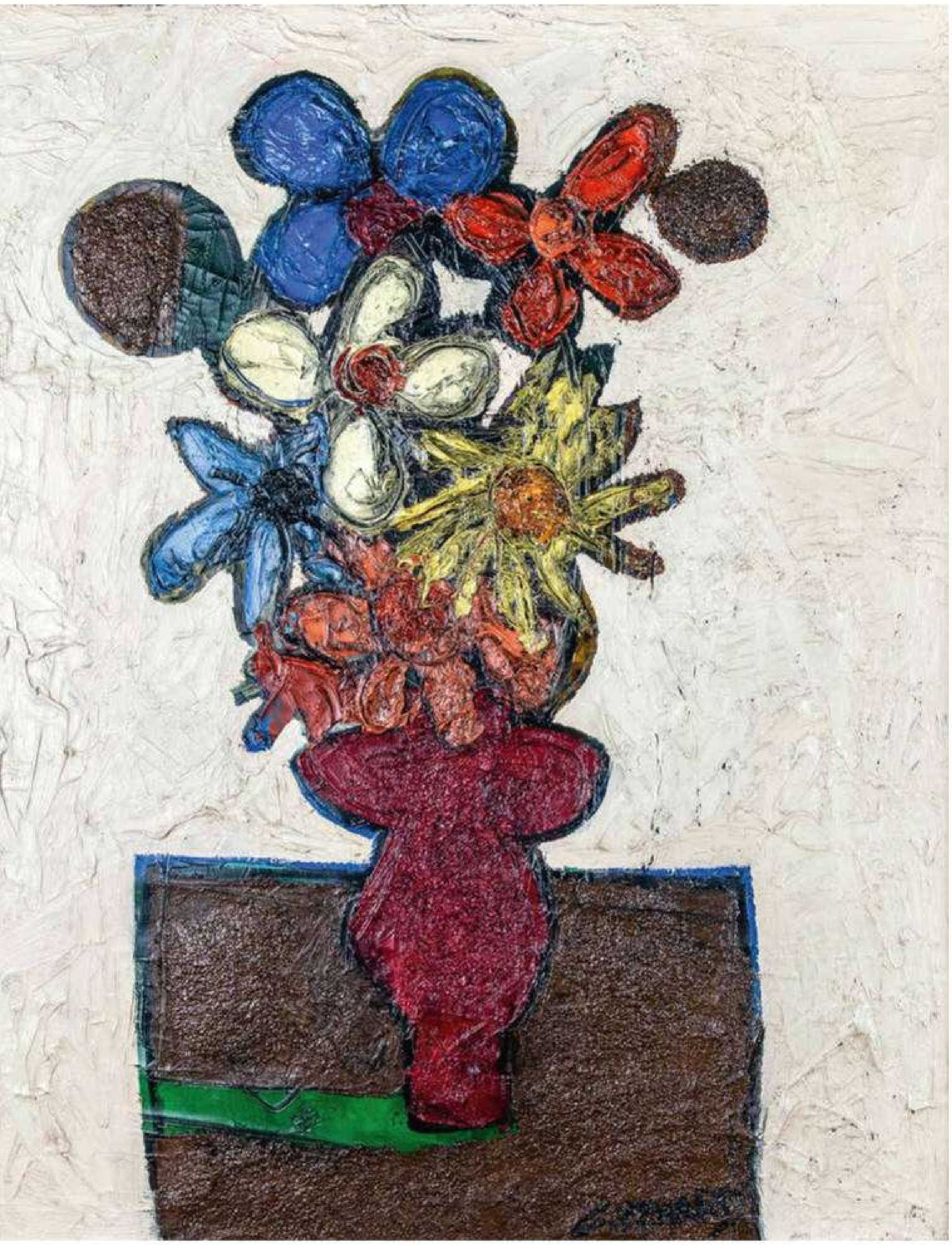
For some, buying art can be a daunting prospect, but the Callaghans always reassure their clients that, if in a few years, their taste has changed, or they move to a different-style property that would lend itself to another genre of art, they can help sell the current pieces and buy new ones instead. “Art is an investment not just in the emotional sense but in monetary terms as well,” Stella explains. “It’s far more enjoyable and attractive than a stocks and shares certificate filed away in a filing cabinet.” ▸

TOP LEFT Venard painted ports and boats in many forms over the years, but *Le Port* (66cm x 86cm) is particularly eye-catching for its use of so many shades of blue.

TOP RIGHT The strong colours and thick impasto paint of *Le Femme Verte* (130cm x 89cm) make it a distinctive piece.

MIDDLE RIGHT Venard often painted on smaller canvases too. *Coffee Pot* (33cm x 45cm) makes up for its lack of size with its strong use of colour.

BOTTOM RIGHT The oil on canvas *La Baigneuse* (114cm x 145cm) clearly demonstrates Venard’s post-Cubist style.



ABOVE *Bouquet de Fleurs* (91cm x 74cm), one of many still lifes by Venard, was painted in 1959 using his signature thick impasto style.

ABOVE RIGHT Stella and Dan Callaghan pictured in their gallery, Callaghans of Shrewsbury.

Over the years, Stella and Dan have seen the value of art for themselves. "We purchased our first painting by Claude Venard about 30 years ago for £125, and today his pieces are selling for between £8,000 and £80,000," Dan says.

In fact, the French artist Venard has gone on to prove a particular favourite of Stella and Dan's, with the gallery now specialising in his works. The artist was born in 1913 and worked until his death in 1999, by which time he had become highly celebrated, with numerous exhibitions around the world. As his career progressed, so did his technique as he continued to experiment with thick impasto and vibrant colours.

It is a style that has proved to have an enduring appeal, with his popularity remaining over the years. "Venard's works seem to touch collectors of all generations, and interior designers favour his pieces for their quality, boldness and texture," says Dan. "We have sold Venard's works to everyone from private collectors buying for their beach cottage in Nantucket, to large corporate financial institutions in London. His allure really is universal."

So, in a dream world, if we all owned a Venard, does Dan have any advice on how to frame a painting? "Framing is so important, it's something worth investing in. The right frame can make all the difference to the presentation of the piece," he explains. "At Callaghans we will always offer advice on how to frame a piece. Most seasoned art dealers spend hours sourcing and selecting the right frames for thousands of pieces, whether it be a bespoke hand-finished floating frame or a gilded swept traditional frame. You have to consider the style of the painting, the period and the palette, which can often be echoed in the finish of the frame you choose."

Finally, how to hang the piece itself. A tape measure and spirit level are vital, and if following the rules, most museums hang modern and contemporary works at 1.55m from the ground to the middle of the picture (the Old Masters are hung higher), so it falls at the average eye level. It is also recommended to use a double fixing either side of the piece for extra security.

"When hanging pictures, it's important to also take into account the lighting and ceiling height of the property," Dan explains. If hanging a single piece but not quite sure where it should go, begin by leaning it against a wall or piece of furniture until confident the right spot has been found. If hanging a montage, either ask for advice from an art dealer, or use a theme to put the paintings together. "Don't be afraid to mix pieces from different periods and genres" says Stella. "Art can be uplifting, sobering, funny and emotional, bringing elements to one's life at a different level. Sometimes just taking a few minutes to enjoy a work of art can change your day." So, what better investment can there be? ■

callaghan-finepaintings.com

FEATURE KATE FREUD **PHOTOGRAPHS** P89 (LE PORT) & P90 (BOUQUET DE FLEURS) © DE JETLEY MARKS PHOTOGRAPHY

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PHOTOGRAPHS (TOP LEFT) LITTLE GREENE; (BOTTOM RIGHT) LORFORDS

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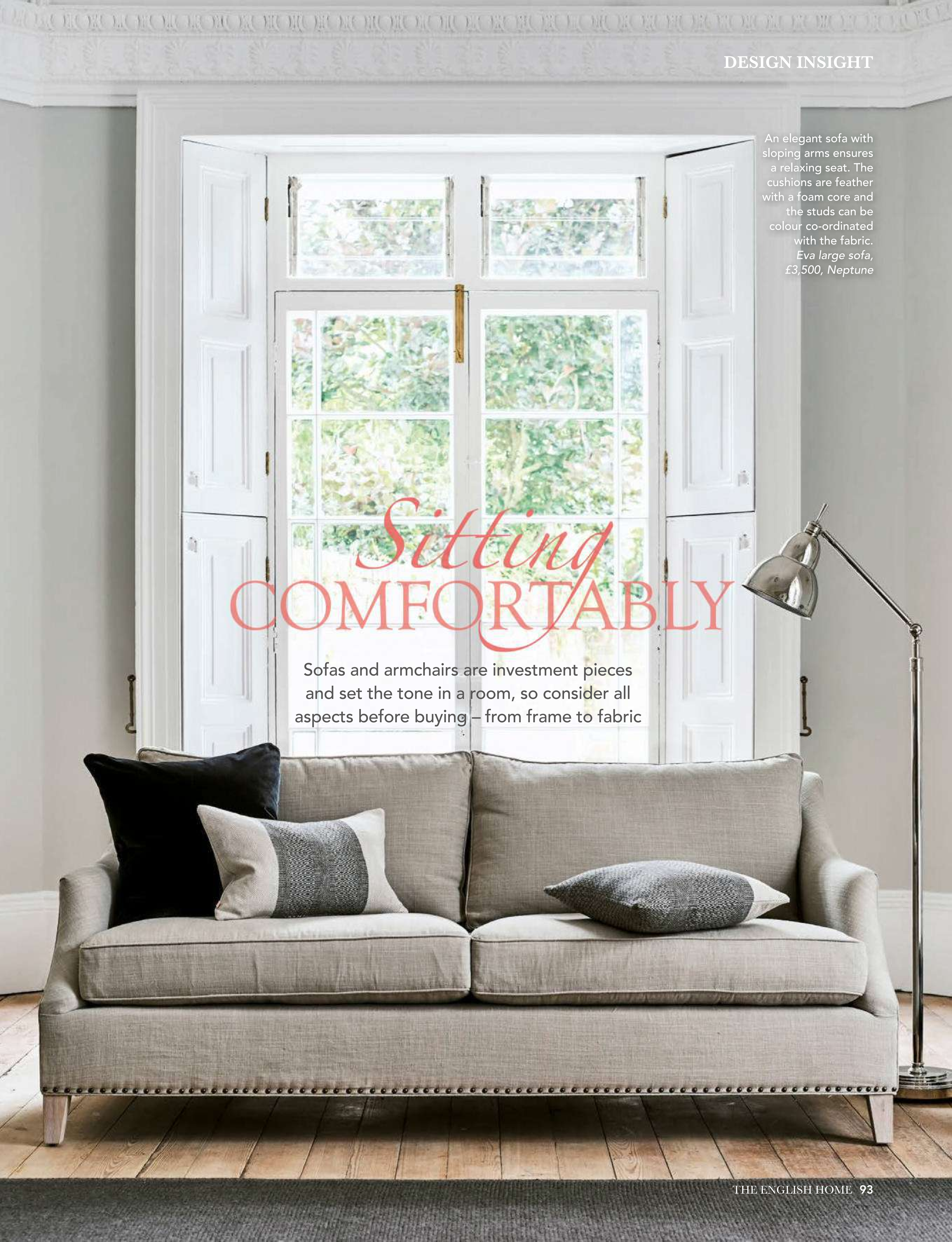


Sitting COMFORTABLY

Sofas and armchairs are investment pieces and set the tone in a room, so consider all aspects before buying – from frame to fabric

An elegant sofa with sloping arms ensures a relaxing seat. The cushions are feather with a foam core and the studs can be colour co-ordinated with the fabric. *Eva large sofa, £3,500, Neptune*

The simple pleasure of sitting in a cosy, plump armchair by the fire with a good book is easy to take for granted. There are many components and decisions that will ultimately determine just how comfortable that seat is, and different people will have different preferences that will affect the result too.

Comfort in seating began with a cushion on a stool and for centuries upholstered seating as we understand it was not on the horizon. Yet many sofas and chairs being made now copy the graceful outlines of seating from centuries past, from Queen Anne through Chippendale to the Regency era, but by adopting a variety of upholstery techniques learned since, delivers the comfort we expect.

Changes in lifestyle have also brought new ways of sitting where generous cushioning and low-lying modular seating are established alternative conventions. Whichever seating is chosen, the comfort we now take for granted was a long time coming.

THE JOY OF SPRINGS

"In this respect we have the Victorians to thank," says James Cook, designer-owner at The Odd Chair Company. "They ushered in a new age of comfort when they developed springing for upholstered furniture between 1860 and 1885.

"It's not the profile of a chair that establishes its comfort, but how it's constructed. Our Milton chair, for instance, is a Georgian design, but we modelled it on a Victorian interpretation of 1880. The upholstery on the Georgian version would have been thin whilst the Victorians tilted the back, added lumbar padding and sprung the seat, redefining its comfort. The use of springing combined with traditional upholstery materials, such as teased hair and cotton wadding, all come from the decades that introduced comfort."

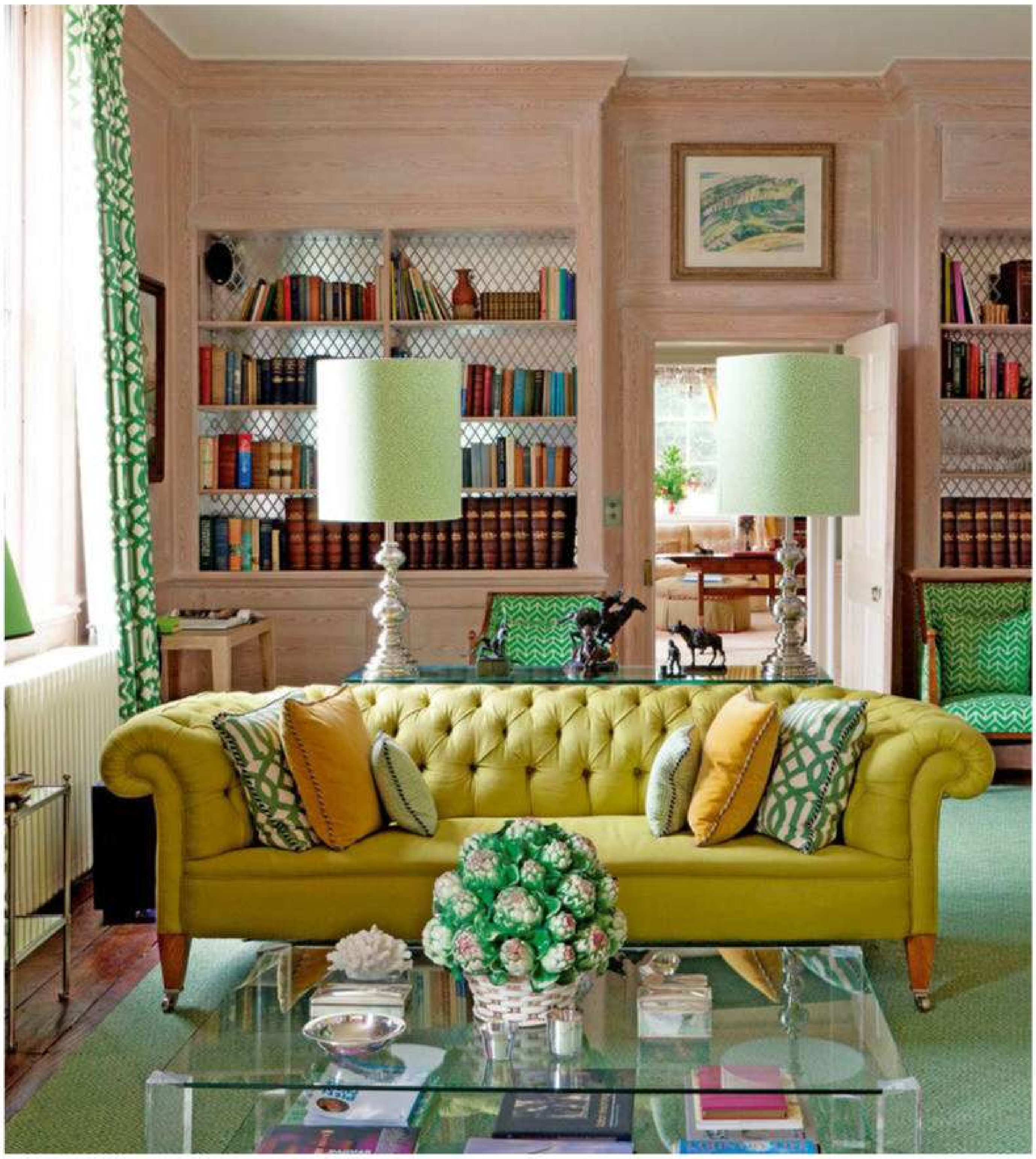
BUILT TO LAST

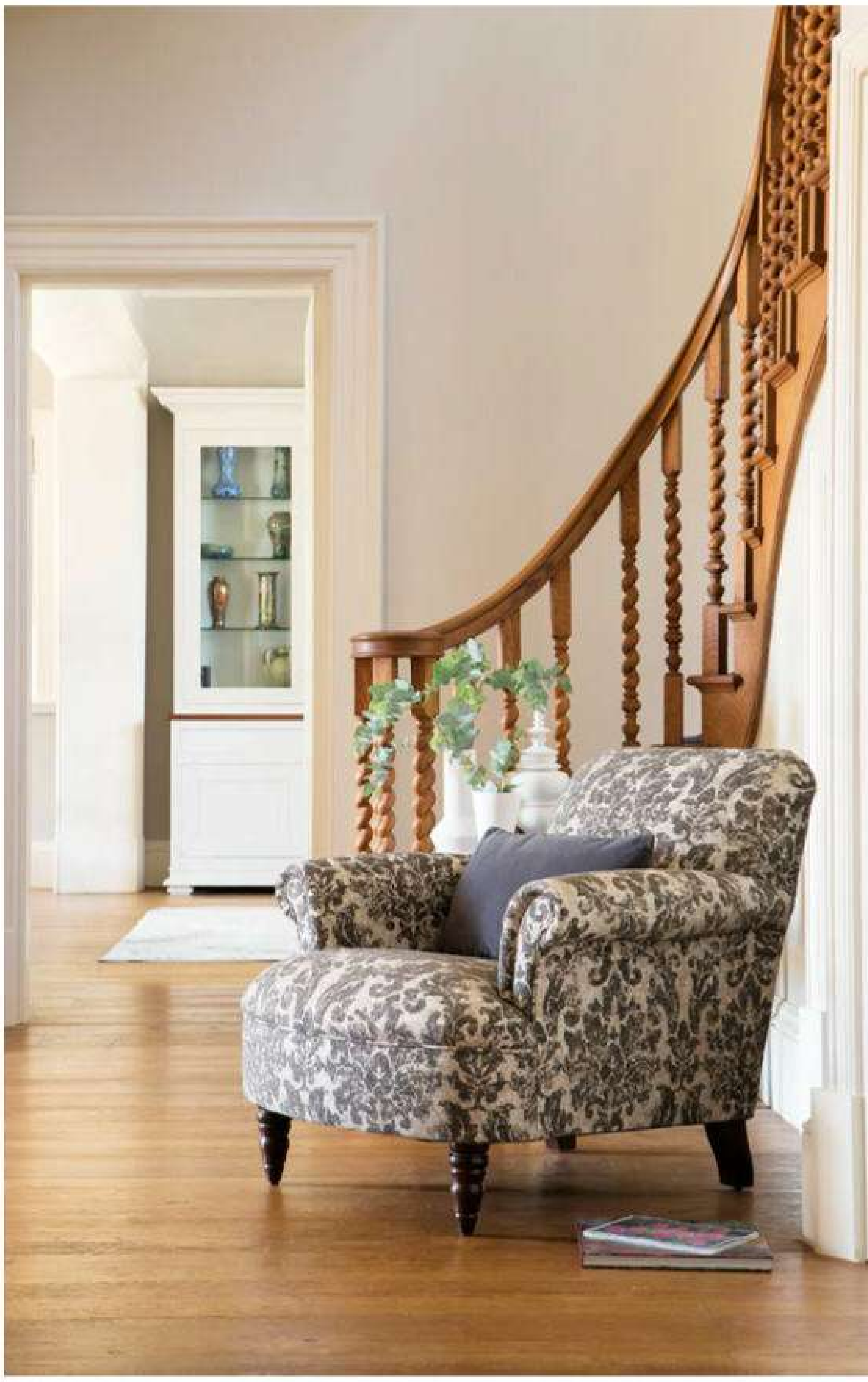
Traditional upholstery is built up on a frame usually constructed in beech, an optimum hardwood for the task. "A good frame is glued, screwed and dowelled," declares David Herbert of David Seyfried, maker of custom upholstery, to explain it is not just the wood but how the frame is put together that ensures long life.

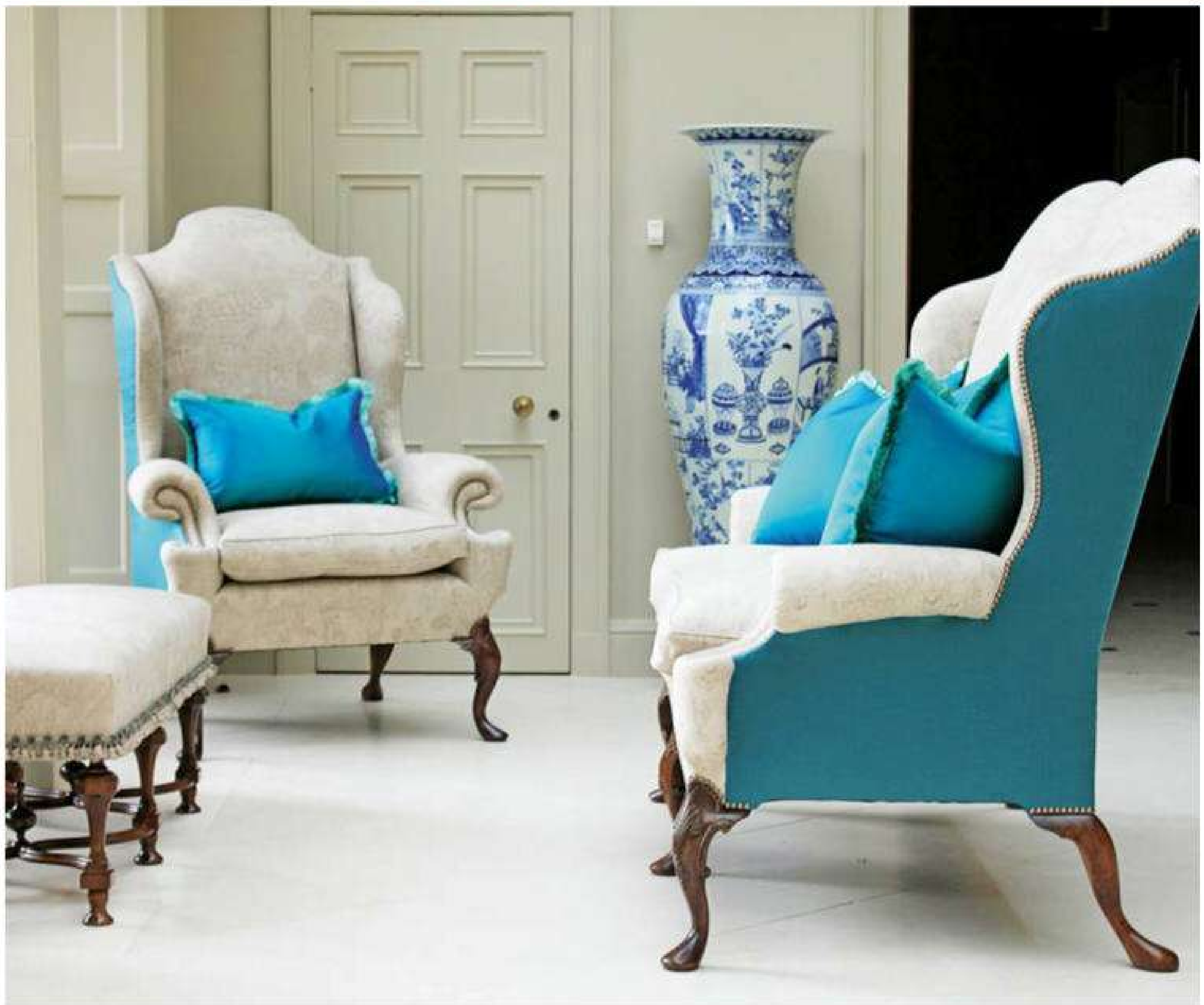
Onto a good frame, the traditional upholsterer tacks jute webbing in a lattice formation across seat and back, and hand-ties individual springs onto it. A layer of canvas is then tacked over the springs and hand-teased coir or hair (now from cows' and pigs' tails) is built up onto this, with a finer grade of hessian sewn in over the top. Another layer of fine hand-teased hair is tied in here and a layer of wool-cotton felt is placed ▸

ABOVE This sofa blends traditional and contemporary in its outline, arm shape and frame base. *Portman sofa, £3,590 plus fabric for a two-and-a-half seater, David Seyfried*

RIGHT Bespoke, handmade in a late eighteenth-century design, this sofa can include 'deconstructed' elements showing sections of jute webbing and linen lining. *Foxhound sofa, from £11,580 plus fabric, Howe London*







ABOVE LEFT Handmade to order, this chesterfield sofa can be made in lengths of up to 244cm. *William 183cm chesterfield sofa, £5,350 plus fabric, The Odd Chair Company*

ABOVE RIGHT An enclosing and supportive armchair with a confident curving profile. *Isabelle chair, from £1,137, Parker Knoll*

LEFT Modelled on a Queen Anne chair, with hand-carved legs, fully sprung seat and high back. *Lennox, from £4,896 plus fabric, The Odd Chair Company*

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'The Victorians ushered in a new age of comfort when they developed springing for upholstered furniture between 1860 and 1885'

on top to soften all edges, before an interlining is sewn in and the decorative upholstery fabric is applied. Sofas and chairs upholstered in this way can be expected to last a lifetime but many will exceed that, usually requiring several changes of top cover along the way.

WAYS OF SITTING

Upholstery made to these exacting standards is an investment, but beyond the financial aspect not everyone looks for a sofa as family heirloom. Fashion is coming through as an important issue with new styles and ways to manipulate materials coinciding with changes in lifestyle. William Stumpf was the first designer in the 1960s to research the ergonomics of the way people sit. Although his discoveries went to the office rather than the home, its effects have not been lost on makers of seating of every kind, as it also coincided with changes in the way people wanted to use upholstered furniture.

Anne-Marie Bruce of Bruce Upholstery has an unusually wide perspective on changing seating habits. Though a traditional upholsterer, she has also researched authentic materials and methods to reupholster mid-century classics such as Arne Jacobsen's Egg chair and is still the go-to restorer for these pieces. "Advertising of the 1950s and 1960s illustrates people sitting upright in chairs and on sofas, reading or knitting," she says. "Today's advertising shows people in relaxed mode, eating and drinking on sofas, with words such as lounging, slouchy and laid back describing the furniture and lifestyle. The response has seen new sofas, including many modular styles, with an increased seat depth so sitters sink down or lay back in soft cushioning, which also means seat backs are quite low."

Master upholsterer Robert Stephenson, founder of Sedilia, has combined tradition with an understanding of materials to design Sennen, a chair and modular sofa that he says, "responds to sitting in all the ergonomically incorrect ways that people do now." The support system for these plump curvaceous pieces begins with computer-cut plywood, as strong as beech, creating the curved outline for the frame without needing a join. Tradition kicks in with a webbed and hand-sprung seat, hessian, then foam, and a cotton lining as a platform for a layer of pure down across the top of the seat. This combination of ancient and modern matches Stephenson's aim that "the point of upholstery is to take you in and support you actively." It is also a style response of the moment.

UNDERCOVER ENQUIRY

Many sofas and chairs in appealing shapes offer excellent comfort levels across a span of prices, some with a 10 or 15-year warranty. To make a reliable sofa or chair more affordable, savings have to be made in ▶

ABOVE LEFT This design offers structured support to the sitter across square or curved chairs and sofas, including modular. *Sennen chairs, from £6,235 plus fabric, Sedilia*

ABOVE RIGHT A high, cushioned back and feather-filled cushions ensure comfort in this sofa. *Devon sofa, from £2,499 for a two-seater, Heal's*

OPPOSITE PAGE Available as an armchair, snuggler for two and in four sizes of sofa, this piece has a hardwood frame, duck-feather back cushions and a choice of two different seat depths. *Alwinton three-seater sofa in Lela Mystery Indigo, £3,461, Sofas & Stuff*

> *'Changes in lifestyle have brought new ways of sitting where generous cushioning and low-lying modular seating are established alternatives'*

ABOVE This yellow bespoke sofa has integrated arms and is upholstered on a traditional solid-beech frame with feather-and-down-filled cushions, *Uppark sofa, £12,960 plus fabric, Max Rollitt*

the way they are constructed. Most are built onto a frame, preferably hardwood and usually beech. Pine, chipboard and fibreboard are not hardwoods but are among budget components.

The support system can be traditional coil springs, individually fixed to webbing and frame, or a single cone spring unit with a mesh top. A serpentine or zigzag spring unit that stretches front to back with hessian on top is also serviceable, provided it is applied correctly: if nailed into a softwood frame it will eventually give out.

Elastic webbing stapled to the frame is another common support system on inexpensive sofas and, if well applied with a hessian layer fitted on top to support the foam cushioning, it can have reasonable life expectancy. If cost-cutting leaves out the hessian, the foam will gradually wear through the elastic and appear on the floor in little chips – an example of built-in obsolescence.

These methods can all build comfortable, well-priced seating in traditional and contemporary styles. Its life expectancy will depend on how it is used; not long for some if children jump up and down on the seats; many years possibly with less energetic use. It is seldom cost effective to seek repairs for a sofa or chair constructed in some of the ways described; it will either be impossible to mend or cost more than to buy new.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Synthetic foam now tops the list of the cushioning products bringing comfort to upholstery, far above hair, coir and feather, in most new furniture. Foam comes in a range of densities and thicknesses, but all are considerably less expensive in cost and application time than traditional cushioning, also less sustainable.

When sofas and chairs have separate seat or back cushions, these can be filled with feather, feather with a foam core, foam alone or polyester fibre. Many traditional upholsterers include feather seat and back cushions with a foam inner as they are popular with clients: large feather cushions, though supremely comfortable, are heavy to keep in shape. The foam inner reduces the need for plumping.

CUSTOMISING COMFORT

There are a number of ways the design of sofas and chairs, traditional and contemporary, can be adjusted to suit the people who will sit in them. Companies with a sizeable standard collection will often point out a particular sofa or chair with a deep seat for someone tall, or can reduce a seat's depth for the petite.

In common with traditional upholstery companies, including John Sankey and Dudgeon, The Odd Chair Company will make any of its seating in a bespoke size. Cook suggests tall people should choose a sofa or chair with a seat high off the floor and a higher back for

ABOVE Buttoning this sofa's feather-topped foam seat cushions reduces the need for plumping. *Banoffee sofa, from £1,645, Loaf*

LEFT This sectional sofa celebrates relaxed comfort in its scale and its linen-like hemp covers and goose feather and down cushion filling. *Truman sofa: corner section, £1,995; armless section, £1,695, Andrew Martin*

‘The look of a sofa or chair is one thing. The comfort level it provides is something else. You must sit on one before you buy’

ABOVE Removable covers in white or off-white linen give a sofa and armchairs a practical advantage. *Avitus three-seater sofa, £3,200; matching Avitus armchair, £2,395; Apadana linen armless chair, £850, all Oka*

good support across the shoulders, pointing out the Archie sofa and chair from his collection that offers both. For someone smaller, Cook suggests the Wellington chair, based on a nineteenth -century model, for providing the correct scale and superior comfort. The relationship between seat height and arm height is significant, too, he explains. “If sitters’ arms slope down they will be more comfortable but that will depend on the cushion filling and we have a formula that ensures the relationship between seat and arm height that works.”

Wing chairs are often the choice for activities such as reading and sewing when the sitter remains fairly still and appreciates support to the back. “Larger chairs that are quite upright, such as our Munro with a sprung back, are popular for reading and sewing, but also for conversation or watching television in comfort,” says David Herbert at David Seyfried, where any sofa and chair can be ordered in a custom size and finish. Balmain & Balmain is another company that makes every sofa and chair to order with a complete choice of individual features.

FACE FABRIC

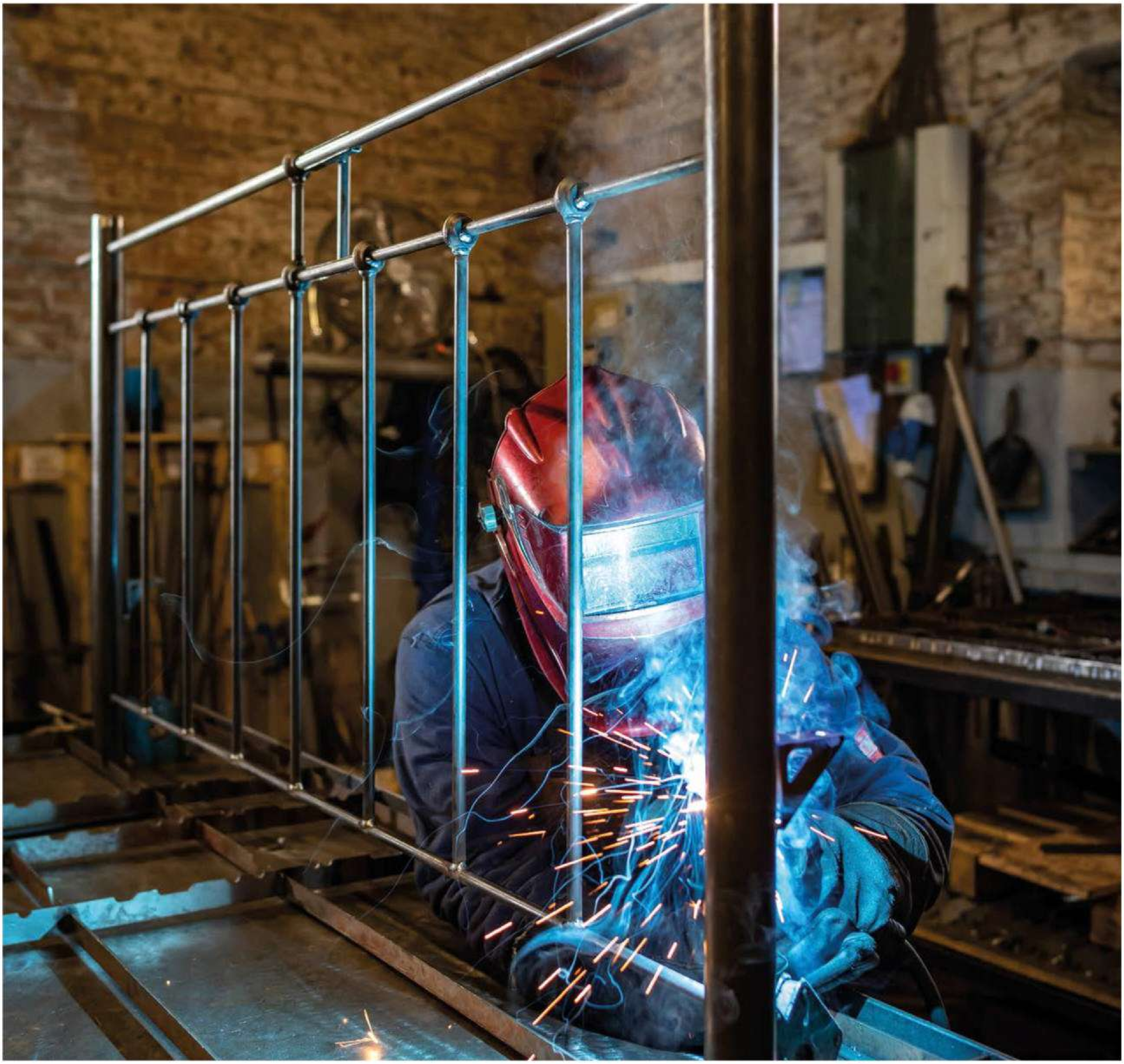
Many upholstered furniture companies include a selection of fabrics recommended for covering their sofas and chairs, with some also prepared to cover in clients’ choice of fabric as long as the quality is appropriate. The Martindale rub test rating gives useful information on a fabric’s likely wearability, but this information does not usually appear on websites, so it is worth enquiring. A rating from 20,000 rubs will be sufficient for light usage; 40,000 and above is best for a family sofa.

Look at the fabric’s yarn composition when choosing from a company’s range and call in samples to ensure it is the right choice – wool or linen for instance, or a mix of yarns, often including a synthetic to increase wearability. Many new 100 per cent synthetic weaves can appear similar to natural weaves so handling a sample and consulting labelling is always worthwhile.

TRY THEN BUY

New seating is always a significant purchase and though initial research online is useful, some sofa and chair companies offer the chance to click and buy, and for the time-strapped that is tempting. The appearance of a sofa or chair will give preliminary information on shape and size, but nothing for judging if it will be comfortable for the people who will use it every day. Upholsterer Anne-Marie Bruce is vocal in insisting no-one should underestimate the value of a test run. “The look of a sofa or chair is one thing,” she declares. “The comfort level it provides for the individual is something else. You really must sit on a sofa or chair before buying it.” No cause to argue with that. ■

FEATURE CELIA RUFEY **PHOTOGRAPHS** P95 (THE ODD CHAIR COMPANY) © PAUL RAESIDE; P97 (SEDILIA) © BEN ANDERS



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Smart ways TO DRESS WINDOWS

Every window has the potential to be beautiful – it is simply a matter of dressing it in a way that makes the most of its natural assets

Windows are the focus of attention in any room, letting the daylight in and framing the view. Now that double glazing and efficient draughtproofing are more widespread, the insulating properties of curtains, blinds and shutters are not as important as they once were, but the desire to cover windows after dark, protect privacy and create a feeling of cosiness in winter and airiness in summer is still strong. How to go about it is the question. We highlight the main considerations with ideas for windows of all kinds, large and small, decorative and practical and show how a well-dressed window can be the keystone of any interior scheme.

PRACTICAL CHOICES

The most hard-working rooms in any home –kitchens and bathrooms – require window treatments that will resist the potential heat and humidity of their environment and bring pattern to places where plain colors often predominate. In well-ventilated situations, fabric blinds will perform perfectly well.

In open-plan kitchens, curtains provide a soft contrast to the hard surfaces and improve the acoustics in rooms that are used as much for entertaining as for cooking. Bi-fold doors are a feature of many kitchen extensions and purpose-made ultra-slim blinds that attach to each panel allow the window to open without raising the shade.

There is no doubt that fabric blinds and curtains make bathrooms feel luxurious, but where the possibility that a steamy atmosphere or water splashes could cause damage, shutters are a good looking and practical answer. They can be fine-tuned to give the right balance of light and privacy, and wiped clean to stay in pristine condition.

OPPOSITE PAGE Rooms with a practical purpose can feel luxurious. Try using a striking design within a simple scheme to add personality.
Wallpaper, £95 a roll; fabric, £55 a metre, both in Knotted Sash design, Charcoal, Warner House

EXPERT COMMENT

Experts in different window treatments offer advice on specialist ideas, terminology and technology

SAM SHERVILL, *Marketing manager, Silent Gliss*

REMOTE CONTROL

Comfort, convenience and security are the main reasons our customers choose automated and motorised window treatments. Essentially, these are blinds and curtains, each fitted with a small electrically powered motor that can be operated by means of a wall switch, remote-control handset, app or computerised system.

As well as making it easy to draw heavy curtains or those at hard to reach windows, some systems can be programmed to open and close at a particular time, to shade rooms when the sun gets too hot or to synchronise with lights or central heating for instant scene setting whether you are at home or not. A manual override can be used in the event of a power-cut and if you have guests unfamiliar with motorised window treatments, a clever 'touch and go' system will take over to move the curtains if they try to pull them by hand.

NICKY MUDIE, *interior designer and director, Violet & George*

EXPLAINING THE HARDWARE

Using a lath and fascia system is a traditional way of hanging curtains that we often use when we want full black-out as it blocks light escaping above the curtains. It is also useful to use when there is not much height above the window architrave. The system consists of a wooden board that projects from the wall above the window with a narrow fascia attached to the front edge, and this can be painted or covered with fabric. The track is fixed to the underside of the board and hidden by the fascia. When curtain poles are specified, we mainly go for metal, with a preference for skinny wrought-iron poles with simple ball or cap finials and a black, brass or bronze metal finish.

In my view, curtain heading styles should be as simple as possible. The two that I usually opt for are inverted pleats for voile curtains and a double pleat for standard fabrics.

CHRISSIE HARPER, *Customer experience manager, California Shutters*

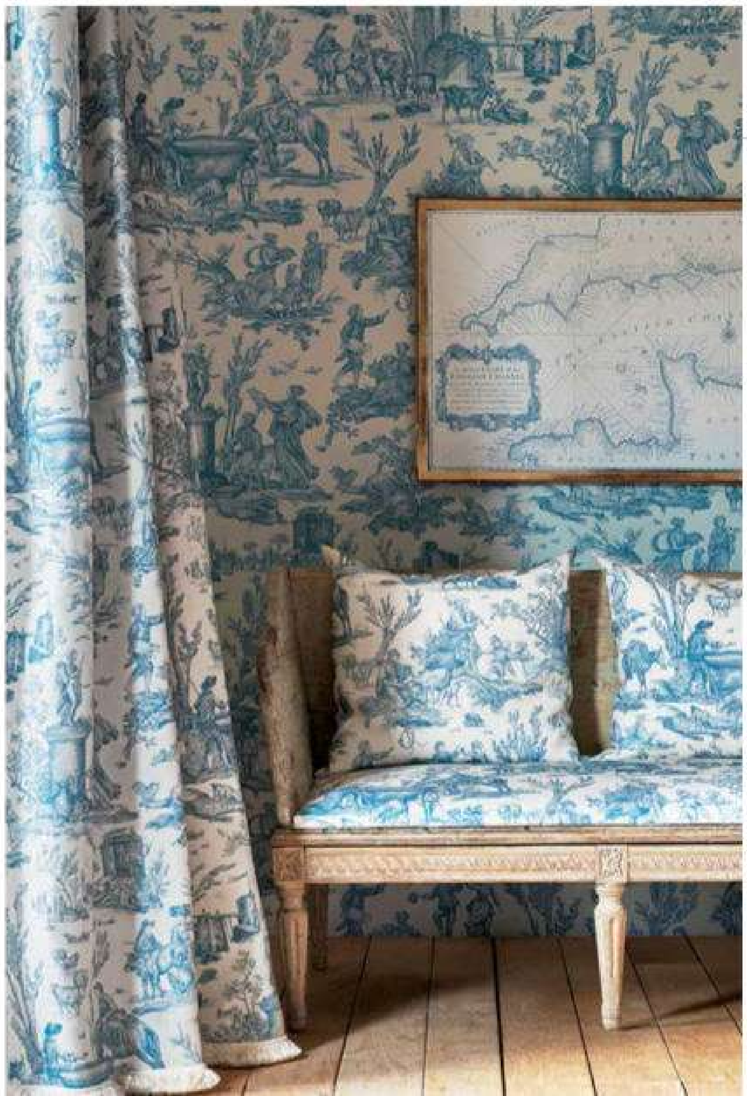
CHOOSING SHUTTERS

Shutters come in a variety of formats and there is one to suit virtually any window. Full-height shutters have a clean classic look and are an equally popular choice for short windows and patio doors. Choose slats that open all at once or a split mechanism that operates the upper and lower slats separately.

Tier-on-tier shutters cover the window with panels arranged in two banks, the top and bottom halves opening independently. This gives excellent light control, allowing you to fold back one set of panels fully or in sections to let light flood in whilst keeping others closed for privacy. Tier-on-tier shutters are a stylish choice for bay windows and practical for windows facing the street.

Cafe-style shutters cover the lower part of the window only, letting natural light into the room whilst maintaining privacy. They add character to a window and combine well with curtains for a softer look.

The ultimate in traditional style, solid raised shutters have no slats and when closed exclude all light. They also provide a barrier against noise and promote a feeling of cosiness. ▶



RIGHT A matching design for walls and windows creates intimacy and a sense of style.
Toile Baptiste fabric, £89.90 a metre; wallpaper £74.35 a metre, both in Ciel, Lewis & Wood
FAR RIGHT *Fleurie fabric, £89.90 a metre; wallpaper, £74.35 a metre, both in Anemone; sofa in Nantessa, Rhone £92.95 a metre, Lewis & Wood*

SURROUNDED BY PATTERN

Using matching wallpaper and fabric resonates with the eighteenth-century fashion for toile de Jouy, a printed textile which was used in bedrooms to cover the walls, furniture and bed hangings. The effect was elegant and enveloping, giving the room a cocoon-like atmosphere. Replicating the style is made easier by the availability of matching wallpaper and fabrics, but still requires a careful hand and, as so often in decorating, an acute appreciation of balance. Plain colours are a traditional foil to the pattern, as are stripes if a third element is needed in the scheme. Ensuring the relationship between fabric and wallpaper designs is sufficiently close presents a challenge to manufacturers. "Our wallpaper ground is a standard colour but our fabrics vary in tint and tone so we have to painstakingly match the two," says Magdalen Jebb, creative director of Lewis & Wood.

A WIDER VIEW

Square or curved, bay windows are a feature of many homes and, despite their reputation for being difficult to dress, they can essentially be treated in the same way as other windows. Fabric blinds of any kind, hung at the individual windows, have a contemporary look and can be operated separately to adjust the level of light, whilst hinged, multi-panel shutters, hung cafe-style or to cover the whole window, help control privacy and light. Both can be used on their own or together with curtains for a more furnished effect.

Curtaining bay windows requires a large volume of fabric and curtain tracks or poles must have strong, secure wall fixings to support it. Tracks and poles may be made to measure or bent on site to fit the window exactly, with rings and gliders that by-pass the brackets. One way to spread the weight of fabric is to divide the curtains and stack them at the angles of the bay as well as the sides. The weight can be reduced further by hanging non-working dress curtains in windows with blinds.

LEFT Roman blinds made from a sheer striped fabric from her own collection allow light to flood into this dining area by Louise Bradley. BELOW Voile curtains in a neutral tint diffuse and soften the light.
Eton Stone voile curtains from £283, Thomas Sanderson

LETTING IN THE LIGHT

For rooms that enjoy good natural light but have windows that are overlooked or with a poor view, translucent curtains and blinds provide a solution that is beautiful in its own right. Suitable fabrics exist to enhance any style of decor, from traditional lace to contemporary textured or transparent sheers, but a current and versatile favourite amongst designers is fine linen. Plain or with a printed or woven design, it looks fresh and breezy. Off-white and cream tones always work well, but coloured fabrics will change the quality of light in the room.

To minimise seaming which will show through and spoil the translucent effect of any window treatment, choose wide-width fabrics, and in the case of Roman blinds, attach hand-sewn rings instead of tapes to guide the cords. Hang curtains from discreet poles or tracks using slim rings or simple pleated headings that will not detract from the delicacy of the fabric. ▶

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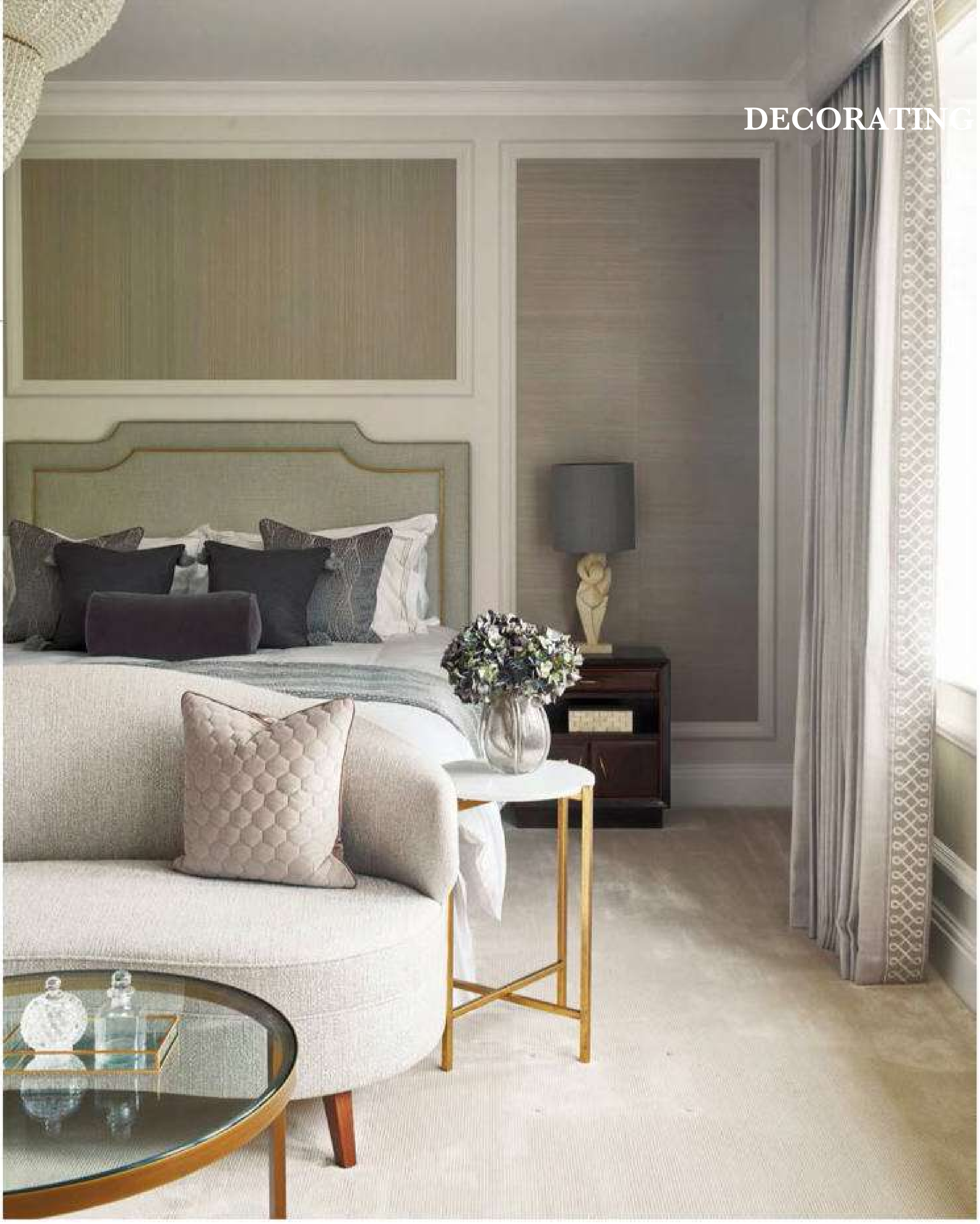
ON THE EDGE

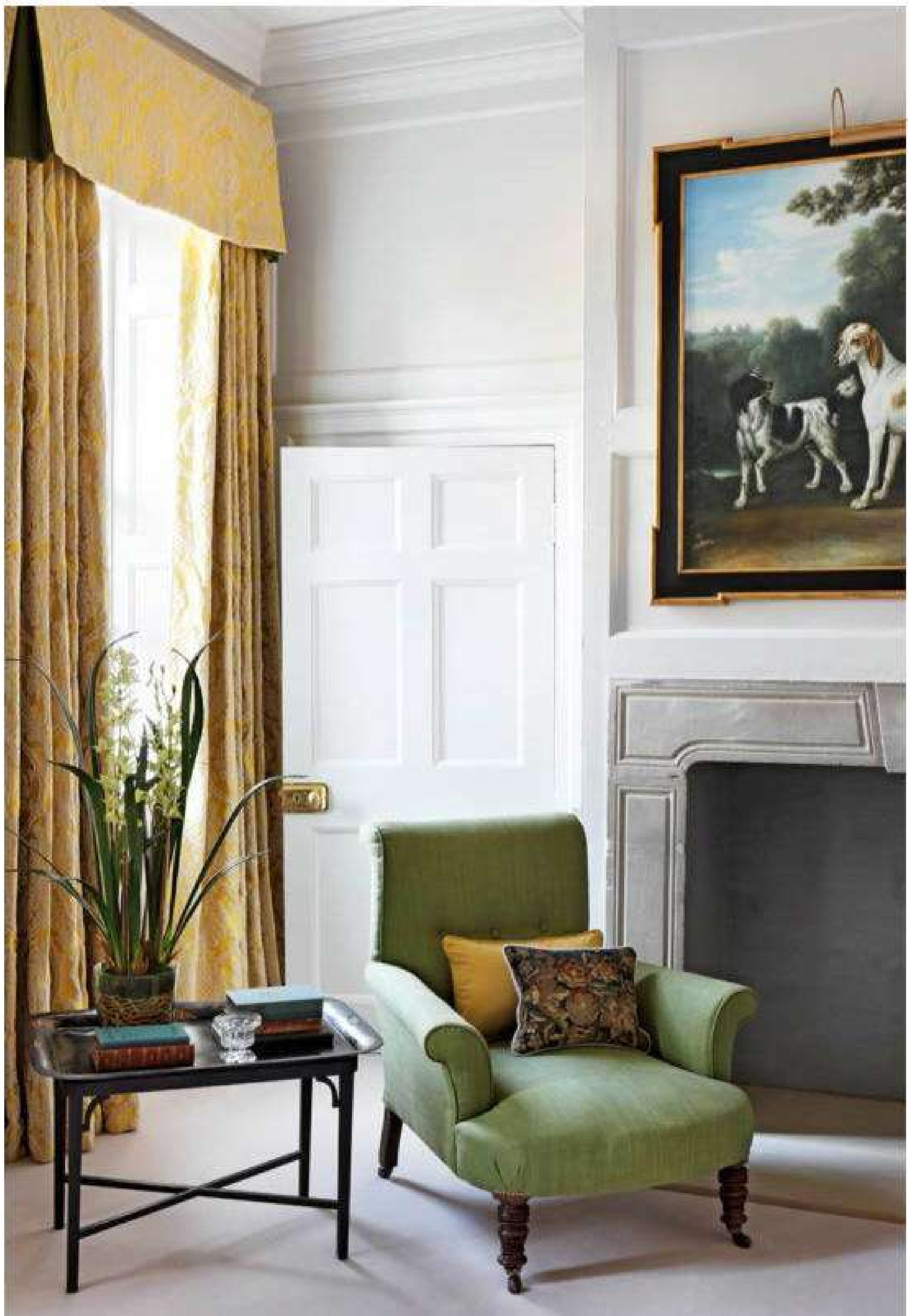
Bound or trimmed edges are a detail that enhances ordinary fabric window treatments and gives plain curtains and blinds a discreet touch of luxury. Applied to the leading edges of curtains, they look pretty when the curtains are drawn back. Trimming a blind or pelmet in the same way gives the window an integrated look.

If the main curtain fabric is patterned, choose a bobble, fringed, tasselled or beaded trim that picks out one of the colours, and where it is plain, go for a contrasting hue or tone. Bright coloured edgings against neutral or dark fabrics can look stunning.

Bound edges add decorative value, too, but they also have a practical purpose. An edging of contrasting fabric applied to the sides of a curtain or blind might eliminate the need to buy an additional drop of the main fabric to achieve the required width.

Curtains made from delicate fabrics can sometimes deteriorate along their leading edges due to sun damage, but a border of sturdier material will help them to last longer.





TOP IT ALL

Straight or shaped, plain or patterned, pelmets give windows a traditional finish. Interior designer Penny Morrison believes that they should be interlined, but not thickly, for a soft three-dimensional effect. “Trimmings on pelmets are very important for giving definition and showing off an attractively shaped edge,” she says. “These can include a full, ruched trim or binding. Plain pelmets edged with a border taken from the curtain fabric work very well.”

For a more streamlined look, Morrison suggests a gathered or box-pleated self-pelmet. “To let as much light as possible into a room, attaching a self-pelmet to curtains will give the effect of a pelmet when the curtains are closed and allow plenty of light to come in during the day when they are open.”

When deciding the length of a pelmet, aim to keep it in proportion with the window. About one fifth of the total height is a reliable guide.

ABOVE In this elegant scheme by interior designer Sara Cosgrove, curtains edged with embroidered tape provide a discreet flourish. *Soutache embroidered tape, £223 a metre, Scalamandre*

LEFT Corner pleats lend a tailored look to the pelmet at this window design for a historic home by VSP Interiors.

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Traditional solid shutters need no further enhancement in a pared-back contemporary sitting room. *Sofa in Quinton £155 a metre; chairs in Kimber, £87 a metre, both Colefax and Fowler*

SLEEK SHUTTERS

A stylish alternative to fabric window treatments, shutters are a neat way to control light and privacy, and like any other aspect of decor they are subject to changing tastes. "Currently, people are drawn towards a clean and simple look, choosing full-height panels, wider slats and a bi-fold format so the shutters fold back leaving the glass completely clear," says India Hutchinson of Plantation Shutters.

Discreet controls contribute to the streamlined effect. Where classic shutters have a central tilt rod to adjust the slats, newer shutters offer the option of an invisible, internal mechanism linking all the slats, so when one is adjusted manually, the others move simultaneously. ▶

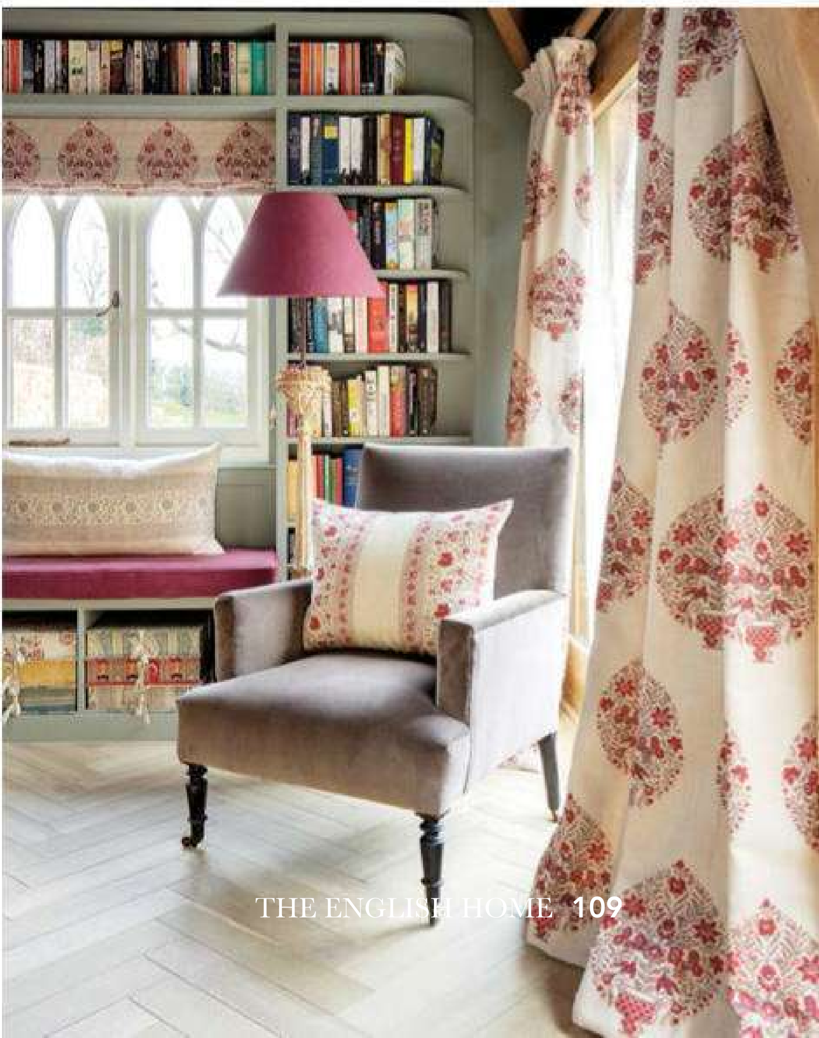
ABOVE Wood-textured vinyl shutters are ideal for a steamy atmosphere. *Made-to-measure Waterberry shutters, from £649 a square metre, Thomas Sanderson*

MAKING CONNECTIONS

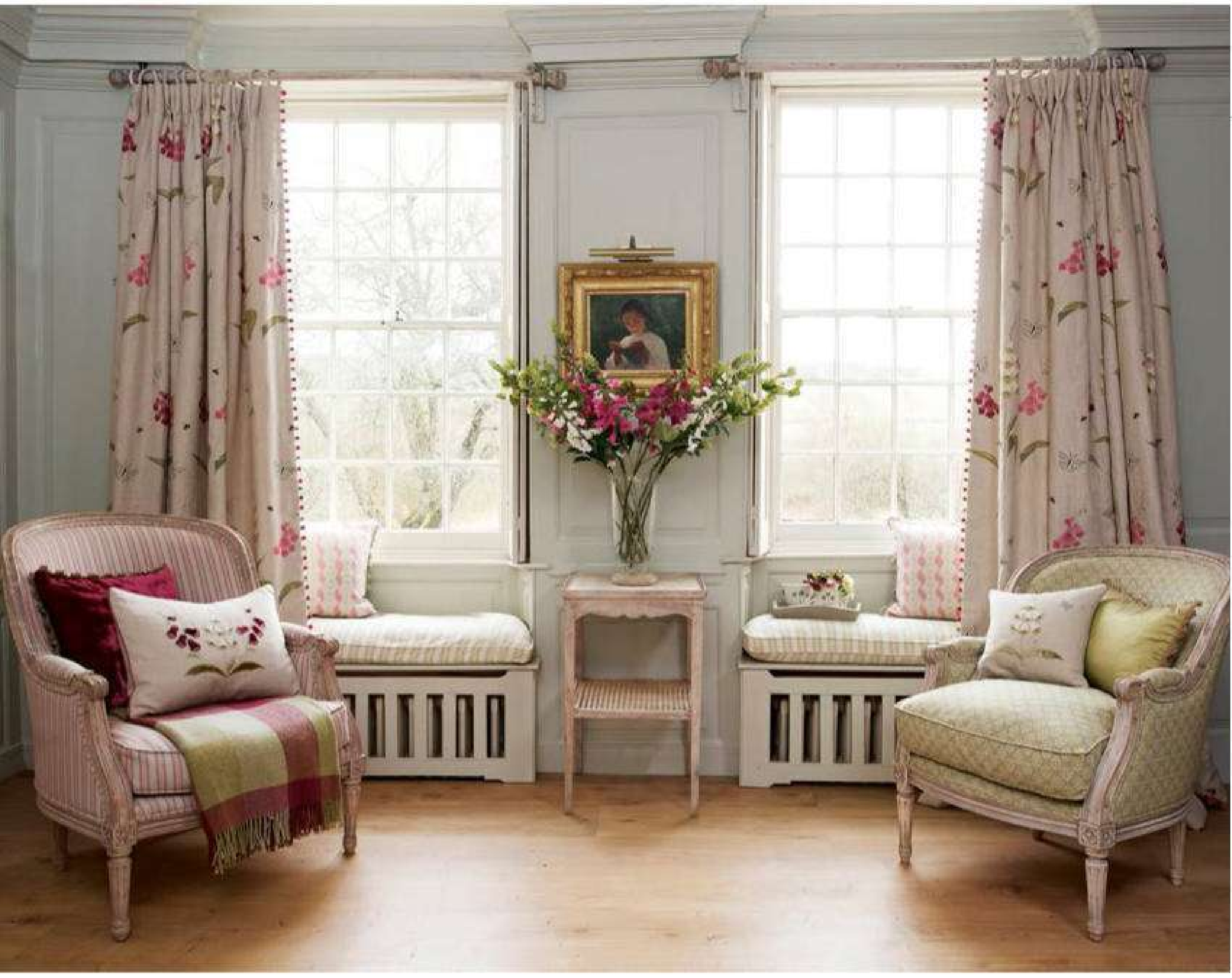
In rooms where there are windows of different shapes and sizes, it can be a challenge to forge them into one coherent scheme. Perhaps the easiest way is to make the link through fabric. Choose a distinctive pattern and use it throughout in a way that suits each window. By keeping the treatments simple, the fabric will become the focus of the scheme.

Where window sizes vary too greatly for one pattern to suit all, related designs from the same fabric collection can unite them. A small-scale pattern or a stripe at smaller windows will sit very well with a large-scale pattern at a full-height window of French window.

Another strategy is to select one window as the main feature in the room and design a treatment that will make it a strong focus. Subsidiary windows can then be dressed in a much simpler way, echoing elements of its design to ensure a there is a visual link.



RIGHT Curtains at the French windows set the scene whilst a Roman blind in the same fabric at the window leaves space for a window seat. *Curtains and blind, Nikita Red, £90 a metre, Kate Forman Designs*



ENJOY THE VIEW

There are few rooms where a window seat would not be a valuable asset. Even in a hallway, it would be a useful place to sit whilst taking off outdoor shoes. They are particularly well suited to bay and recessed windows where a built-in banquette or storage seat can turn a potentially under-used space into a relaxed dining area or a cosy nook in which to read or dream, but the lack of a recess need not be an obstacle. A bench seat that doubles as a radiator cover or storage chest can be built under virtually any window.

How best to shade the window depends on its position. Blinds of any kind are always a good choice, but recessed windows look pretty and all the more inviting if they are hung with curtains. A pole fitted across the front of the recess allows the curtains to be stacked back against the wall when open or drawn across to create a quiet secluded space behind.

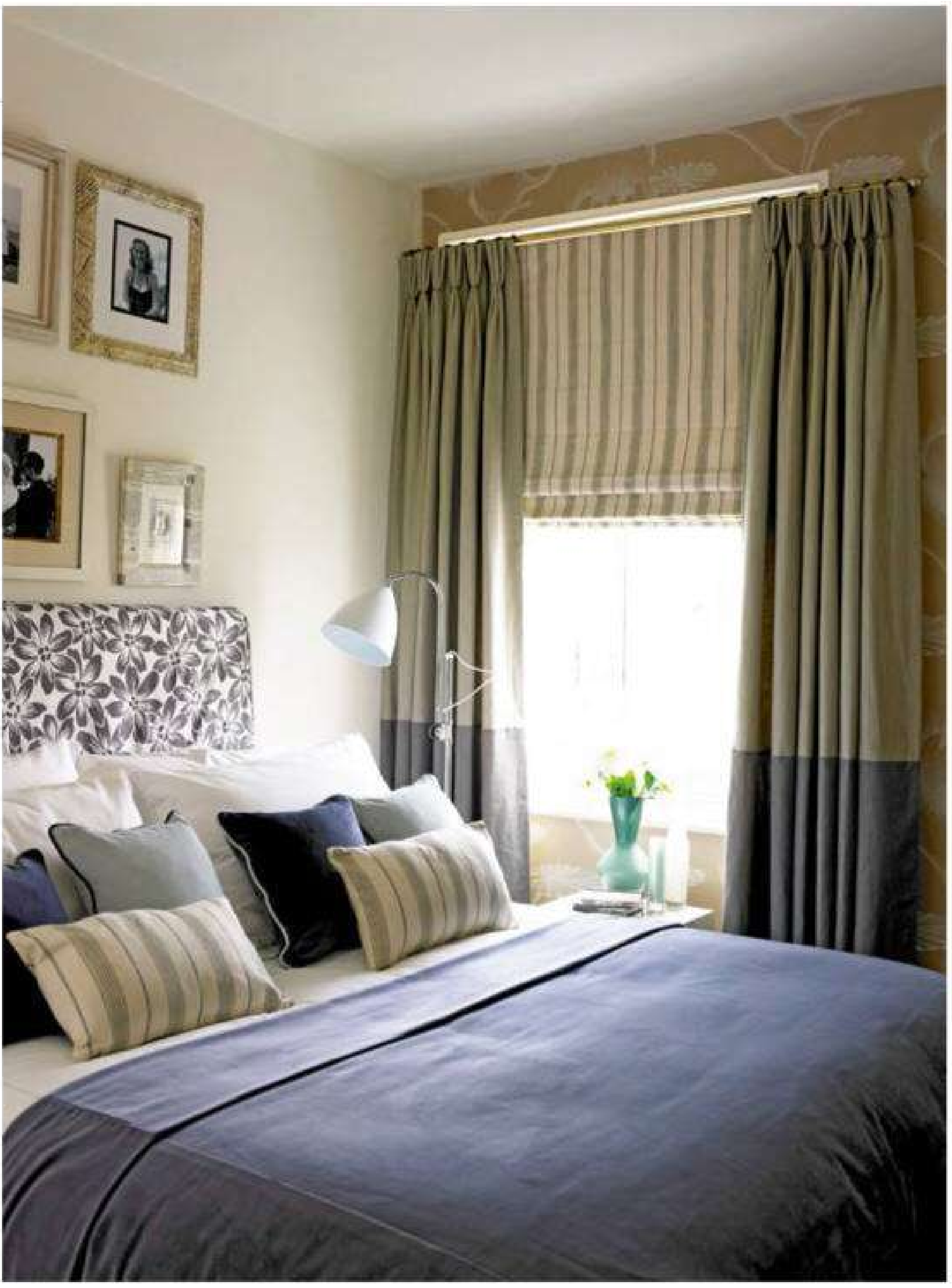
THE LAYERED LOOK

Fitting multiple coverings at the same window to protect furnishings from strong sunlight and provide privacy has a long history, but whilst hanging a double layer of curtains is a favourite arrangement, it is not the only one.

Roller and Roman blinds work well with curtains. A black-out roller blind fitted behind a translucent panel ensures privacy when lights are turned on, and two blinds, one sheer the other in closely woven fabric, can be a neat solution at a smaller window.

For curtains, a double track or double pole carried on one pair of brackets is the least invasive means of support, and most are intended to hold a combination of lightweight and standard curtains.

If a more elaborate layered design appeals, note how far it will encroach into the room. Nicky Mudie of Violet & George advises caution. "We try not to steal too much space," she says. "Before you know it, you've taken up 50cm, especially where there is a radiator under the window." ■



ABOVE Whilst these windows have shutters, curtains on simple poles add a layer of cosiness. *Curtains, Original Foxglove, £125 a metre; Pom pom trimming, £15 a metre, both Susie Watson Designs*

LEFT Adding a Roman blind behind curtains promotes a cosseting, enveloping feel in this bedroom. *Curtains in Feather Grey and Gris fabric, £40 a metre, Loom & Last. Roman blind in Loom & Last customer's own fabric – for similar, try Panama Stripe in Putty/Cream, £37.50 a metre, Ian Mankin*

FEATURE MAGGIE STEVENSON **PHOTOGRAPHS** P107 (SARAH COSGROVE) © HELEN CATHCART. P109 (COLEFAX AND FOWLER) © JAN BALDWIN

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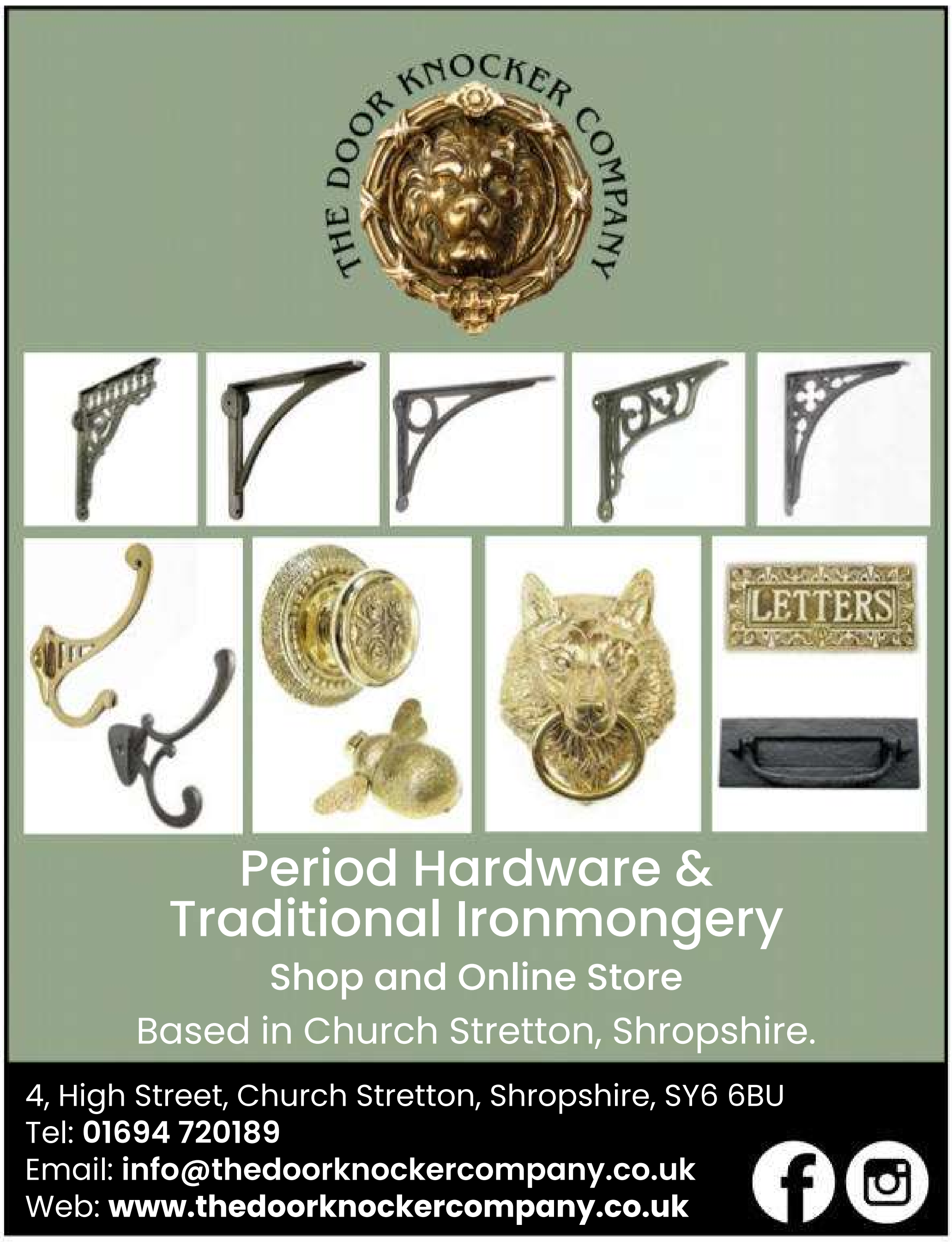
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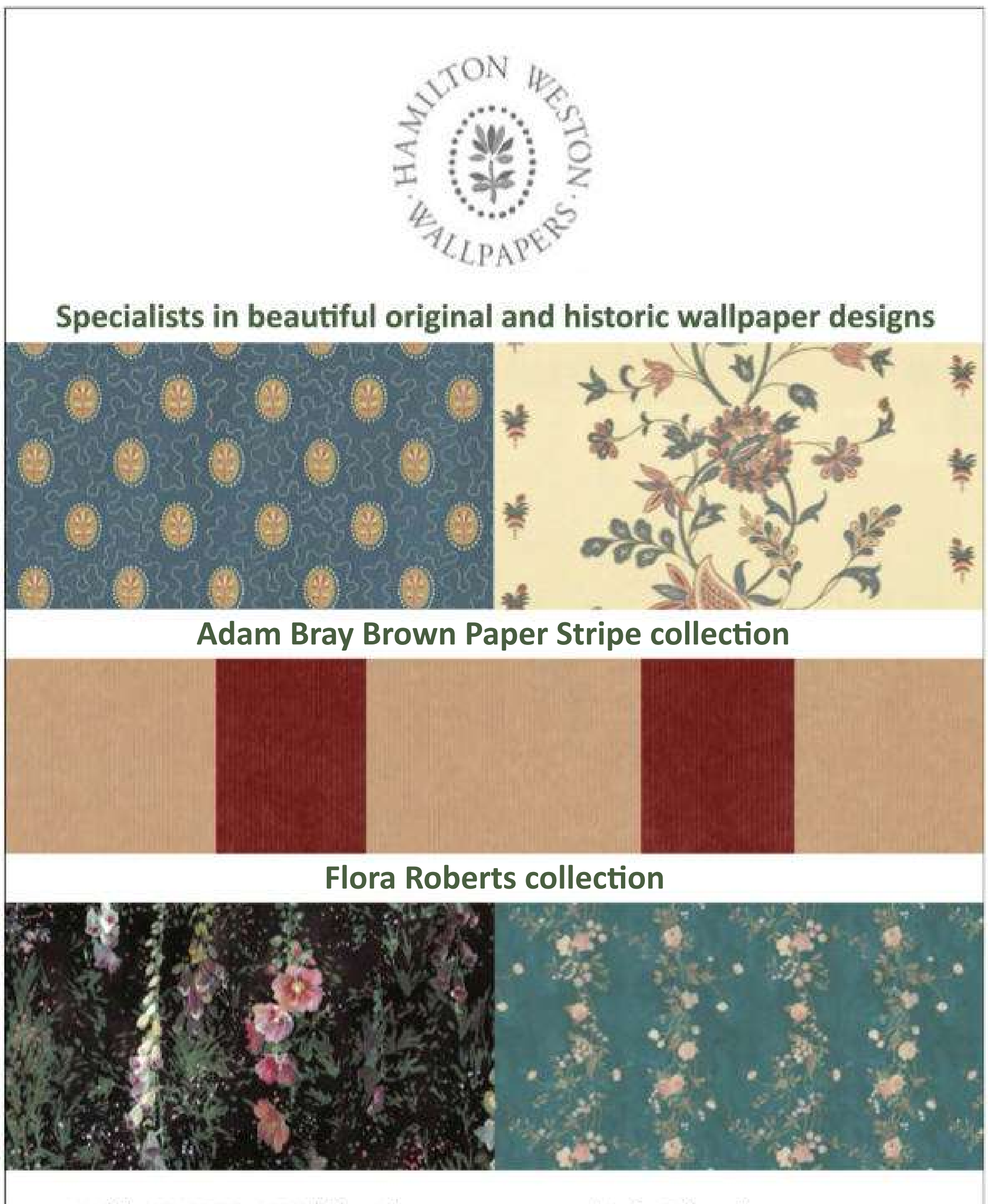
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Fuelled BY STYLE

Deciding on the right fire for the home requires a careful balance of substance and style – from fuel types to design ideas, our comprehensive guide looks at how to make a property-perfect choice

When selecting a new fire for any interior, considering the best or available fuel required – be it for a wood-burning stove, electric or gas fire, or for a more traditional open fireplace – is as important as choice of styling. Whether seeking to create a classic country, period townhouse or contemporary look, we look at practicalities as well as how to incorporate the right design into the home for a complementary style that offers both warmth and comfort. ▶

A freestanding wood-burning stove can provide a cosy focal point for those seeking sleek lines and a contemporary look. *6148 Wood-burning stove, £1,899, Morsø*

ABOVE For an eye-catching touch, look to an attractively tiled hearth. *Cuban Black Block tiles, £41.66 a square metre, CTD Tiles*

RIGHT Ideal for any style of interior, from town house to cottage, this wood-burning stove meets the clearSkies scheme and ecodesign standards. *Hoxton 7 low pedestal wood-burning stove, £2,474, Arada Stoves*

OPPOSITE PAGE With one of largest ever picture windows, this stove takes inspiration from the Regency era with archetypal detailing and single framed glass door. It uses clean burn Blu technology and is exceptionally efficient with a clearSkies level 5 rating. *Cranmore 7 wood burning stove, from £1,700, Charnwood*

WOOD AND MULTI-FUEL STOVES

A freestanding stove, whether wood-burning or multi-fuel (where wood, coal or smokeless fuel can be used), is the perfect way to bring traditional charm and character into the home. It provides an instant focal point within sitting rooms and can be installed within dining areas and kitchens too – in fact, anywhere with access to a flue. Stoves work well to complement classic country decor, period townhouses and more modern spaces with an elegant aesthetic, thanks to a wide variety of designs to select from.

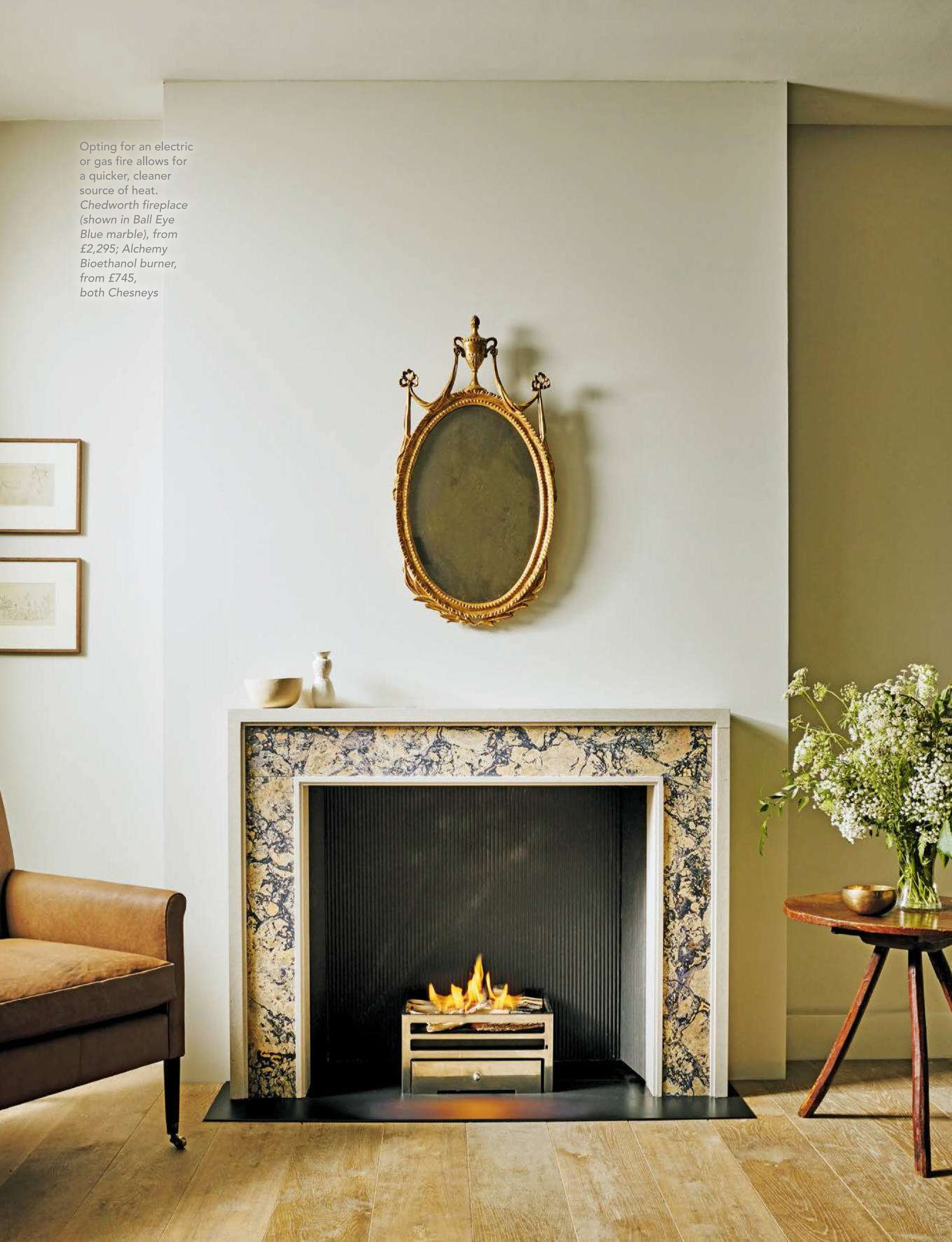
A new stove is a good way of making an outdated heating system more energy-efficient. Vicky Naylor, general manager of ACR Stoves, highlights key points to consider: "Every stove must be installed by a competent installer such as a HETAS-registered engineer," she counsels, "and it is important to check what heat output is needed to ensure the stove creates the heat required for the room size. This varies from 5kW to 9kW and retailers will be able to calculate the output required."

In older properties it is also essential to have the existing chimney flue inspected before installation in case any remedial works are needed. Bear in mind also that for thatched roof houses, there are specific building regulations to be adhered to (Historic England's online content has further details on this point).

Wood-burning and multi-fuel stove designs range from curved cylindrical models to classic or brightly coloured enamel versions through to traditional black cast-iron styles. Decorative details suit period homes whilst still incorporating high-efficiency, modern combustion and easy-to-use features such as single-lever controls and removable ashpans.

Where wood-burning stoves can look stunning alongside dark wall panelling and rich leather furnishings for an intimate, cosy den feel, a lighter look with colourful or neutral walls and floor can create a striking contrast that allows the stove to stand out. Bear in mind, too, that whilst stoves can be installed completely freestanding, a large fireplace chamber also suits them well and allows for further styling options.

"A log store or stand accessory can help fill a tall opening," says Peter Mintoft, director at Charlton & Jenrick. "Wooden beams are popular above a stove chamber, though a wood-effect non-combustible beam is more practical and eliminates any overheating potential for the wood. Be sure not to line or construct a fireplace chamber or chimney breast using timber or plasterboard – they cannot withstand the heat – and always use 100 per cent heat-proof materials. Consider, too, that a fireplace of smaller dimensions may suit an inset stove better than a freestanding one. When it comes to surround, limestone is very popular, looks great and is naturally heat-proof, whereas light-coloured hearths can be discoloured by ash or embers – combining with black granite, slate or riven tiles can be a good choice. Ceramic tiles are heat-proof and versatile, including some reproductions of natural stone that perform better than the natural materials." ▶



Opting for an electric or gas fire allows for a quicker, cleaner source of heat. *Chedworth fireplace (shown in Ball Eye Blue marble), from £2,295; Alchemy Bioethanol burner, from £745, both Chesneys*

ELECTRIC AND GAS MODELS

When the desire is for a quicker, cleaner heat source, an electric or gas fire is ideal. There are various designs to choose from, including stove-style models, cassettes, fire baskets and double-sided, amongst others, depending on the desired-for look. Their versatility allows for classic or more contemporary styles to be created, either forming a feature focal point within a room or blending in to the background.

The benefits also include a host of energy-efficiency features in line with the latest regulations. "With the focus on improving efficiency, electric fires and stoves are now developed to be more user-centric," explains Nik Gardner, electrical research and development manager at Stovax and Gazco. "These types of fires now work in tandem with a user's lifestyle, meeting their energy needs in the most efficient way. For example, many electric fires now feature open-window detection to save energy. Designed to factor in a sudden drop in temperature such as an open door or window, it means the fire automatically switches off its heat output to save energy whilst still offering a cosy flame."

Likewise, many electric fires may also include a high-power thermostatic heating mode, allowing for the setting of a preferred room temperature – "this means the fire will adjust its power to reach the desired level as efficiently as possible," says Gardner.

When it comes to style, many electric and gas designs have an array of fuel-bed options including log, coal and pinecone effects. Gas, electric and even ethanol fires are instant and convenient and can be paired with a stone mantel for a country classic look or inset for a more elegant contemporary feel.

"One of the most exciting aspects of installing an electric fire is the added flexibility," says Andy Hitchman, managing director of Solution Fires. "You can create a fireplace to suit your individual taste, choosing from a variety of sizes. You can choose to have your electric fire wall-mounted, floor-standing, or built into a customised chimney-breast structure. Alternatively, you can opt for a pre-fabricated modular suite. This enables a high level of versatility in which you can create the perfect setting by mixing and matching different design elements and finishes. A scene light kit can also be added to give the fireplace design another visual dimension, which can be easily controlled from a remote handset or by app from a smart device." ▶

ABOVE LEFT This electric fire uses an immersive LED system to create 144 potential flame options and provide a realistic three-dimensional display. *Ellere electric fire, from £1,099, Arada Stoves*

ABOVE When a gas fire is preferred, this design is available as a balanced-flue model. It can be installed within any of the range's frame, mantel or lining options, such as the Claremont limestone mantel and brick-effect lining shown, and features realistic log effects. *Reflex 75T gas fire, £3,695, Gazco*

LEFT A thermostatically controlled heating element in this stove provides the ability to warm a room and cook small dishes in its 20-litre oven. *Cream electric stove, £1,295, Everhot*

ABOVE Offset an open fire with warm tones to create an inviting feel. *Easy Elegance homeware collection, from £25, Oka*
RIGHT In a period property, aim to match the fire surround to the style of the original architecture such as a Victorian-inspired design as shown. *Reproduction Carved Corbel fireplace, £4,800, Renaissance London*

OPEN FIRES

The heat from an open fire brings a room to ambient temperature whilst providing plenty of warmth and character, making it a perfect option for period homes. Many period properties will also already have an existing open fireplace, providing the opportunity to polish and enjoy the design already in situ, or to install something new to complement the building's original architecture and features.

Whilst it is often thought that open fires can be messy, inefficient and lose heat quite quickly, the aesthetic benefits and the joy of making and watching a fire in an open fireplace often outweigh these possible issues. Owen Pacey, founder of Renaissance London, advises careful research ahead of making a decision: "It's important to choose whether you would prefer a restored antique fireplace, salvaged from another property, or whether you would like to create your own, based on your research of the property and the kind of look and feel you aspire to for your home or room. Restoration can be a hugely gratifying and challenging process, from sourcing to installation, but the result is a true piece of history amongst the fabric of your home."

If searching for a replacement fire surround, size is key – it should not overpower the room, yet conversely not be too small and appear insignificant either. When determining what type of finish suits the style of the room best, there is a huge selection of options, from marble and limestone to carved wood, cast iron and more, all of which will lend both character and charm.

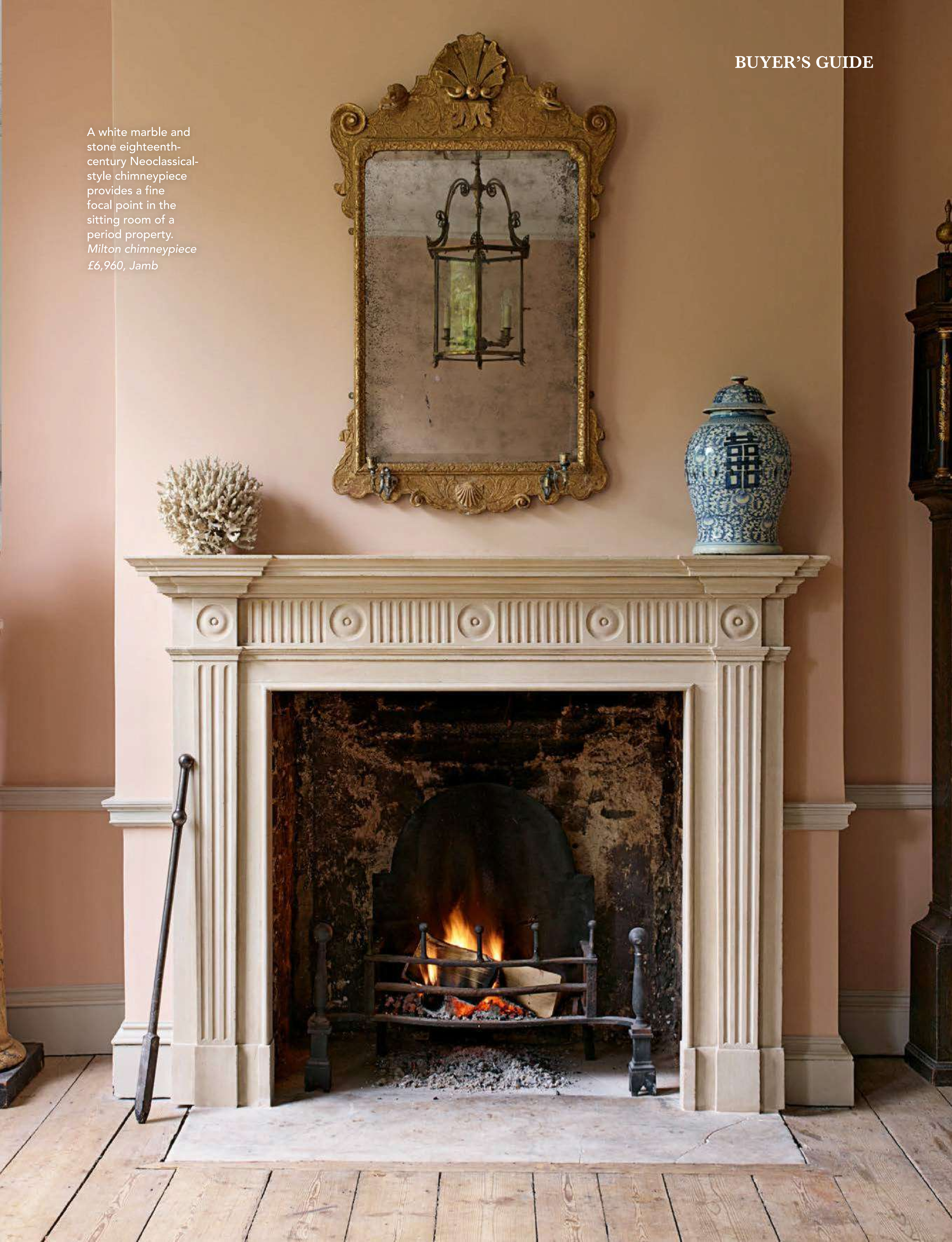
"I'd always recommend sticking to the period of the house when looking to purchase a fireplace," says Pacey. "This ensures that the styles align and the fireplace will look like it has always been there. The ground floor of Victorian properties always used to have a marble or slate fireplace and later on in the Edwardian era, slate became much more popular. My go-to material would always be marble, however, as it is generally very durable. If you are thinking of inserting something functional or decorative inside the fireplace, I generally like to stick to original cast iron inserts or a freestanding basket."

For those seeking to combine period looks with today's technology, the increasingly popular notion of creating a media wall with a television cut-out in the chimney breast affords the opportunity to enjoy the best of both within the context of both modern and country looks. ■

Need-to-know

- New energy efficiency regulations come into effect in January 2022 – these form part of the Government's Clean Air Strategy for the UK to become carbon neutral by 2050. Choosing an EcoDesign Ready model will ensure that the stove is compliant with the new structure.
- Opting for a clearSkies level 5 rating also ensures the stove meets the minimum energy efficiency rating whilst keeping emissions within a permissible maximum level.
- House coal and wet wood are now banned from being burned in stoves. Instead, look for dry or seasoned wood with a moisture content of 20 per cent or less, as this produces less smoke and pollution.
- Defra-approved models are smoke exempt, allowing users to burn wood in smoke-controlled zones.
- For further information visit *stoveindustryalliance.com* and *clearskiesmark.org*

FEATURE HAYLEY GILBERT **PHOTOGRAPHS** P118 (OKA) © DAMIAN RUSSELL



A white marble and stone eighteenth-century Neoclassical-style chimneypiece provides a fine focal point in the sitting room of a period property. *Milton chimneypiece £6,960, Jamb*

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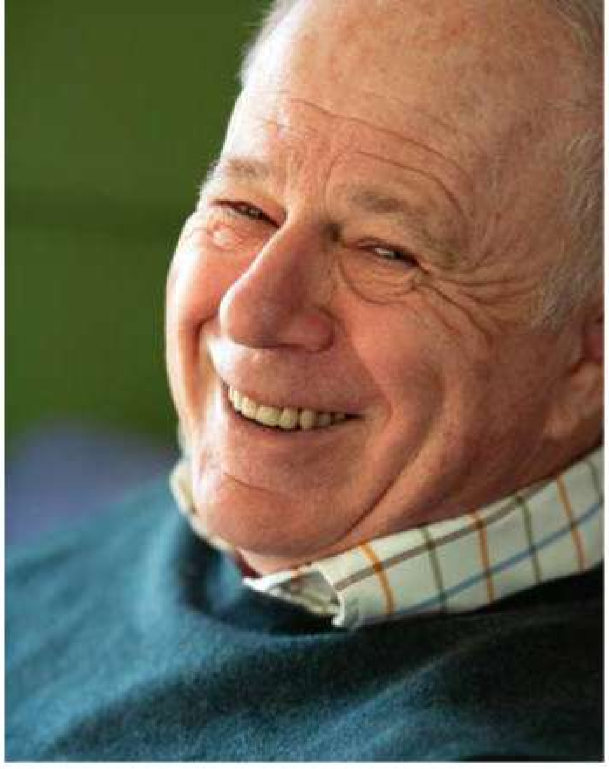
GOLDEN TREASURE

Regular readers will recall our columnist Matthew Fort extolling the virtues of the trinity of late autumn and winter fruits – the apple, pear and quince – in our September issue. Golden quince is plump and ready for harvesting from October through to December and makes a welcome addition to crumbles and pies layered in slices with its apple and pear cousins. Quince offers a sweet, fragrant and complex, almost tropical, flavour profile once cooked, elevating a humble Sunday pudding into something sophisticated and unexpected.

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN **PHOTOGRAPH** © THE PICTURE PANTRY / ALAMY

FROM PATCH TO PLATE
Matthew Fort

In praise of kale – an often overlooked yet extremely versatile, wonderfully healthy addition to the table

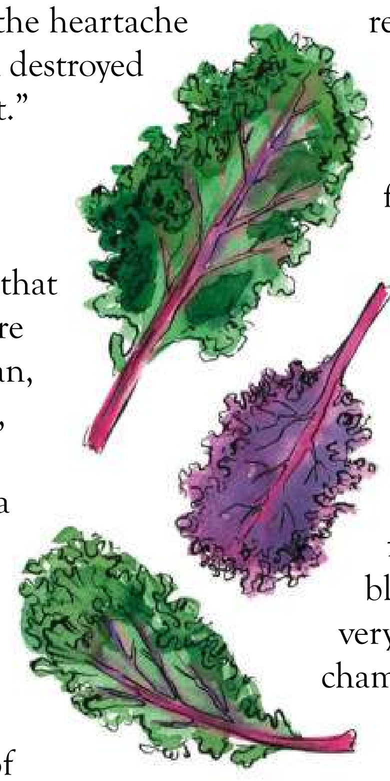


Did you know that the Scots used to call their kitchen gardens the kailyard, so great was their love of this inestimable vegetable? I'm with the Scots on this. Kale is a swashbuckling vegetable. It thrives when lesser vegetables wither and wilt. It is pleasingly easy to grow, tolerant of casual treatment and cold. As the great Dr D G Hessayon put it in his still invaluable work *The Vegetable & Herb Expert*, "The hardiness of kale is unexcelled by any other vegetable – there is none of the heartache in seeing all one's handwork destroyed by sharp and prolonged frost." Heartache, indeed.

In addition, kale is a most handsome addition to the vegetable patch. Or perhaps that should be kales, because there are many kinds – Red Russian, Curly, Redbor, Cavolo Nero, Gai Lan (or Chinese kale), Sea kale, Scarlett, Tronchuda kale (from Portugal), Walking Stick kale – each with a different-shaped leaf, green hue and flavour. They add individual and decorative shapes at a time of the year when, let's face it, individuality and decoration are in short supply in the average kitchen garden. There's even a quite recent addition to the kale family – kalettes, small, frilly things that are a cross between kale and Brussel sprouts and can be cooked much the same way as the two vegetables from which they were developed.

Which brings me on to yet another of kale's many virtues – its versatility. Its subtly different flavours bring light and life to a multitude of dishes. Strip the green leaf off the stalk or rib, which no amount of cooking seems to reduce to tenderness. Once that's done, put it raw in smoothies and those blended drinks designed to start or end your day with a healthy zip; or chopped up fine in salads. Stew it (in oil with garlic, chilli and pork meat balls) or boil it (and dress it with olive oil and lemon juice). Add it to soups ands stews. It is even possible to make crisps out of them because kale leaves have enough structure to be deepfried (briefly). If you don't have a deep fat fryer, coat them in a little vegetable oil, dust with salt, lay the leaves reverently on a non-stick sheet and bake in a low oven (150°C/fan 130°C/gas mark 2) for 20–30 minutes. Cool and enjoy the fragile, joyously crispy result.

Finally of course, kale is healthy, very, very healthy, packed with antioxidants, vitamins and minerals and the like and high up every nutritionists must-eat selection. Good for your heart, good for your immunity, good for your bones, good for your blood pressure. All in all, I find it very odd that kale hasn't had many champions in the kitchen until quite recently, the Scots aside. I've searched in vain through the works of such guiding lights as Elizabeth David, Jane Grigson, or even Dorothy Hartley for praise of kales, other than the odd passing reference to that old Victorian favourite, sea kale. They didn't know what they were missing. ■



About Matthew
Best known as a judge on BBC's *Great British Menu*, Matthew is an award-winning food writer and critic. He was the Food & Drink Editor of *The Guardian* for 15 years and is the author of four books.

KALE, SPLIT PEA AND HAM HOCK STEW

A splendid winter warmer. The kale adds a most agreeable bite to a traditional combination.

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

1 ready-cooked ham hock
250g yellow split peas
Water
2 onions, sliced
2 sticks of celery
300g cavolo nero or other kale, leaves stripped from the stalks and roughly chopped
Vegetable oil
1 tbsp French mustard
Salt and black pepper

METHOD

- Soak the ham hock overnight to reduce the saltiness.
- Put into a pan with the split peas. Cover with water. Cook until the split peas are soft, about 35 minutes or so.
- Drain off some of the liquid if necessary.
- Take out the ham hock and cut off the meat into small bits and pieces before adding them back into the split peas.
- Chop the onion and celery finely and the kale leaves less finely.
- In a second pan heat some vegetable oil and gently fry the onion, celery and kale leaves until soft.
- Tip in the plit peas and ham. Stir in the mustard and stir some more to mix properly.
- Reheat for 5 minutes or so.

PORTRAIT GRANT SCOTT **ILLUSTRATION** IRINA VANEEVA / SHUTTERSTOCK **PHOTOGRAPH** P123 © BAUER SYNDICATION / STOCKFOOD

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EXPLORING *North Norfolk*

Sweeping views across vast open landscapes, a romantic coastline and dreamy beaches are amongst the many delights in this area of England's easternmost county

Be it elegant Georgian architecture, charming windmills or the wild marshlands of the coastline's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the draws of North Norfolk are as beguiling as they are diverse. Whilst the summer months play host to events such as the week-long Holt Festival, which features musicians, poets, actors, dancers, artists and comedians, the change in seasons brings with it a charm of its own in the form of seaside strolls and pier-side promenades. Windswept walks and cheeks flushed from fireside pub lunches are hallmarks of the cooler months here in this picturesque spot of eastern England, as are the many and wonderful opportunities to explore the area's wealth of things to see and do.

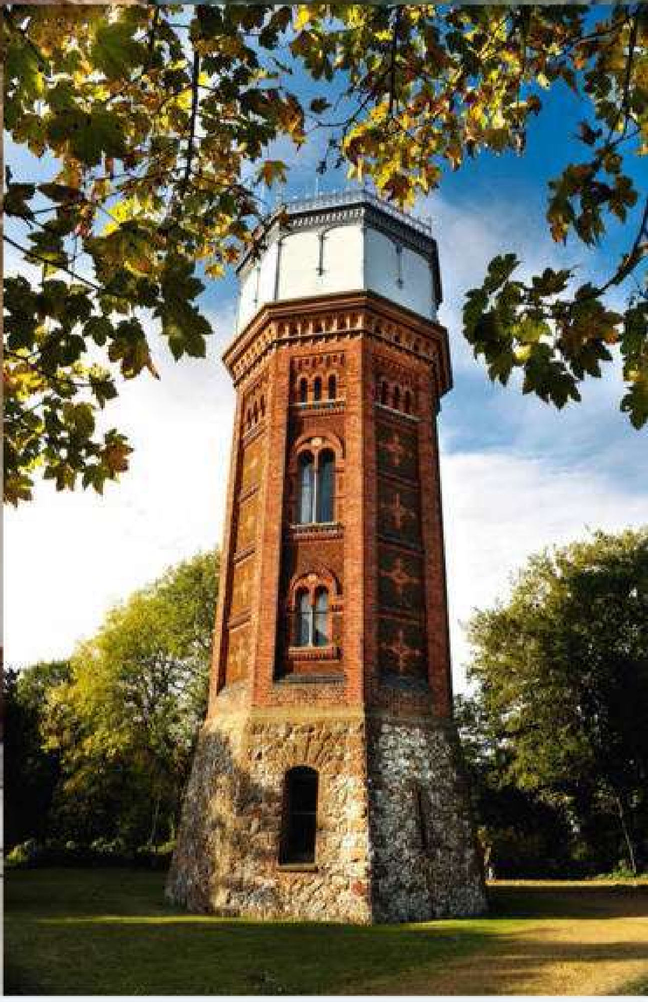
PLACES TO VISIT

NORTH NORFOLK COASTLINE

Running from Hunstanton in the west through to Sheringham in the east, the coastline of North Norfolk merits far more than words when it comes to describing its status as an AONB. The nature reserves are breathtaking for walkers, birdwatchers and wildlife lovers alike. Be sure to factor in a boat-only visit to Blakeney Point seal colonies, run by the National Trust and famed at this time of year in particular when pupping takes place from the end of October to the beginning of November *(nationaltrust.org.uk/blakeney-national-nature-reserve).*

Villages and market towns such as Brancaster (known for its mussels) and Burnham Market dot the coastline, as do tidal saltmarshes such as those at Stiffkey. Beaches, too, add to the striking backdrop – their wide sandy expanses are said to be favoured by ▶

TOP ROW Beach huts at Wells-next-the-Sea; A friendly face at Blakeney Point seal colony; The north and west fronts of Blickling Hall.
MIDDLE ROW An Anish Kapoor sculpture at Houghton Hall; North Norfolk Railway's steam train; One of the self-catering rooms at Cley Windmill.
BOTTOM ROW The North Garden planting area at Sandringham Estate; Looking out towards Blakeney from Morston Quay; Holkham beach



INSIDER INFORMATION

Emma Deterding is the founder and creative director of interior design company Kelling Designs and homeware brand KD Loves. She is based in Chelsea and North Norfolk

"North Norfolk is a mecca for great food and antiques alike. The lovely little Langham Blue Bell pub *(22 Holt Rd, Langham, NR25 7BX, Tel: 01328 830 630; langhambluebell.co.uk)* offers delicious local food, whilst Cookie's Crab Shop in Salthouse is the go-to for the best seafood in the area *(Salthouse, NR25 7AJ, Tel: 01263 740352; salthouse.org.uk)*.

Art Cafe in Glandford is great for coffee and to bag a bargain from its selection of small glassware, jewellery and vintage clothes at great prices, so you'll be sure to walk away with some gorgeous finds *(Manor Farm Barns, Glandford, NR25 7JP, Tel: 01263 741711; art-cafe.org)*.

Try Holt Antiques & Interiors Centre for antiques and interior pieces *(Thornage Rd, Holt, NR25 6SU, Tel: 01263 478110; holtantiquesandinteriors.co.uk)*, or Bayfield Hall Antiques & Interiors Centre for a more considered collection *(Holt, NR25 7JN, Tel: 01263 715538; bayfieldhallantiques.com)*."

PHOTOGRAPHS (SANDRINGHAM) © SIMON BROADHEAD / SHOOT 360; (HOLKHAM) © HOLKHAM ESTATE / STEVE ADAMS; (HOUGHTON) © HOUGHTON HALL / PETE HUGGINS; (APPLETON) © DAVID KIRKHAM; (HOLT HIDEAWAY) © EMILY BOWDEN; (STIFFKEY STORES) © STIFFKEY STORES

the Royal family for walks whilst in situ at nearby country retreat Sandringham Estate.

Holkham beach at Wells-next-the-Sea sits within the eponymous estate's stretch down to the coastline – beyond the Palladian charms of Holkham Hall and its magnificent marble hallway entrance (*holkham.co.uk*), the colourful wooden huts along the waterfront are largely privately owned and a nostalgic nod to times gone by. Just beyond, the town of Cromer – synonymous with delicious crab – is home to a Grade II listed Victorian pier which also houses the Pavilion Theatre (*Cromer, NR27 9HE, Tel: 01263 512495, cromerpier.co.uk*), off the side of which enterprising optimists can be spotted catching crabs – a practice known locally as 'gillie-crabbing'.

NORTH NORFOLK RAILWAY

Running from Sheringham, along the coast, then inland to Holt, this heritage steam train service has appeared on screen (with star turns in the BBC's *Dad's Army* and *Hi-de-Hi*) and operates daily from April to October. November onwards sees a regular timetable of special events, including trips in the magical Norfolk Lights Express.
Station Approach, Sheringham, NR26 8RA, Tel: 01263 820800; nnrailway.co.uk

SANDRINGHAM ESTATE

The country retreat of Her Majesty The Queen stands in a 20,000-acre estate and is open to the public. The house and gardens are pre-bookable until 14 October, whilst the dog-friendly Royal Park, with its woodland paths, nature trails, children's area and an abundance of wildlife, is open daily throughout the year, as are the shop and dining facilities.
Sandringham, PE35 6EN, Tel: 01485 544112; sandringhamestate.co.uk

HOUGHTON HALL

Much like its neighbour Sandringham, the home of the 7th Marquess of Cholmondeley operates seasonally from May to September, providing the opportunity to explore the Palladian hall and its gardens, which include several contemporary sculptures by world-renowned artists displayed permanently in the grounds. In addition to this, the estate holds exhibitions by artists and sculptors such as Tony Cragg, Anish Kapoor and Damien Hirst.
King's Lynn, PE31 6UE, Tel: 01485 528569; houghtonhall.com

BLICKLING ESTATE

The birthplace of Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII's second wife, Blickling comprises a magnificent red-brick Jacobean mansion with a formal garden in vast parklands at the heart of the Bure Meadows. Interiors of note in the house include the Long Gallery, with spectacular seventeenth-century ceiling plasterwork by Edward Stanyon, whilst outside the wider estate takes includes ancient woodlands and Blickling Lake.
Aylsham, NR11 6NF, Tel: 01263 738030; nationaltrust.org.uk/blickling-estate ▶

TOP ROW The Saloon at Sandringham; South Lodge West at Holkham. MIDDLE ROW The Palladian interior of Houghton Hall with Tony Cragg's art on display; Appleton Water Tower at Sandringham; Holt Hideaway. LEFT The interior of Stiffkey Stores.

CREAKE ABBEY
CAFÉ & FOOD HALL

NO1
CE
CROMER
VIAMORA

STAR PL STORES

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GOURMET DELIGHTS

STAR PLAIN STORES

Born of owner Tom Brady's love of cheese, wine and good coffee, this deli offers a plethora of treats, from the main trio to further food items and interesting staples. Hero products include raw-milk artisan-produced Stichelton blue cheese, wines from local Norfolk producer Winbirri, and coffee from roastery Climpson & Sons. Sandwiches and coffee are also available to takeaway.
8 Fish Hill, Holt, NR25 6BD, Tel: 01263 478500; facebook.com/StarPlainStores

WIVETON BELL

Recently awarded a coveted Michelin Bib Gourmand for high-quality food at reasonable prices (tipped by some as a precursor to the next-step star status), a mile from Blakeney, this gastropub with rooms offers a menu that changes seasonally, with dishes created from locally sourced ingredients such as seafood from the coast and game from nearby estates. Booking is encouraged, though tables in the front bar are kept free for those just having a drink or in search of refreshment after walking the nearby footpaths.
Blakeney Rd, Wiveton, NR25 7TL, Tel: 01263 740101; wivetonbell.co.uk

NO1 CROMER

Cromer's famed crab is just one of the many delights on the menu at this spot on the town's seafront, owned by Michelin-starred chef Galton Blackiston. On the first floor, Upstairs Restaurant at No1 offers views across the seafront and the pier to accompany dishes such as cockle popcorn and dressed crab salad, whilst downstairs is home to the Fish & Chips Restaurant and takeaway. Note that reservations are not taken, as tables at both are only available on a first-come, first-served basis.
1 New St, Cromer, NR27 9HP, Tel: 01263 515983; no1cromer.com

CREAKE ABBEY

Interiors by Kelling Designs are an undeniable draw of on-site holiday cottage The Carrot House at this spot by the tranquil ruins of a former Augustinian church, though the fantastic cafe, food hall, and regular farmers' market on the first Saturday of the month are temptation enough for those looking to refuel with delights and dishes created with seasonal home-grown Norfolk produce. Open for dining inside and outside, the cafe also sits alongside a charming courtyard area with locally owned lifestyle and homeware shops.
North Creake, NR21 9LF, Tel: 01328 730399; creakeabbey.co.uk

TOP ROW The cafe and food hall at Creake Abbey; Ripe Saint-Marcellin cheese at Star Plain Stores; Holkham parkland wildlfe.
MIDDLE ROW Fish and chips at No1 Cromer; The interior at Wiveton Bell; A scallop dish from the menu at Wiveton Bell.
BOTTOM ROW Sticky toffee pudding with candied walnuts at the Langham Blue Bell; Star Plain Stores owner Tom Brady; A celebration of cheese at Creake Abbey food hall.

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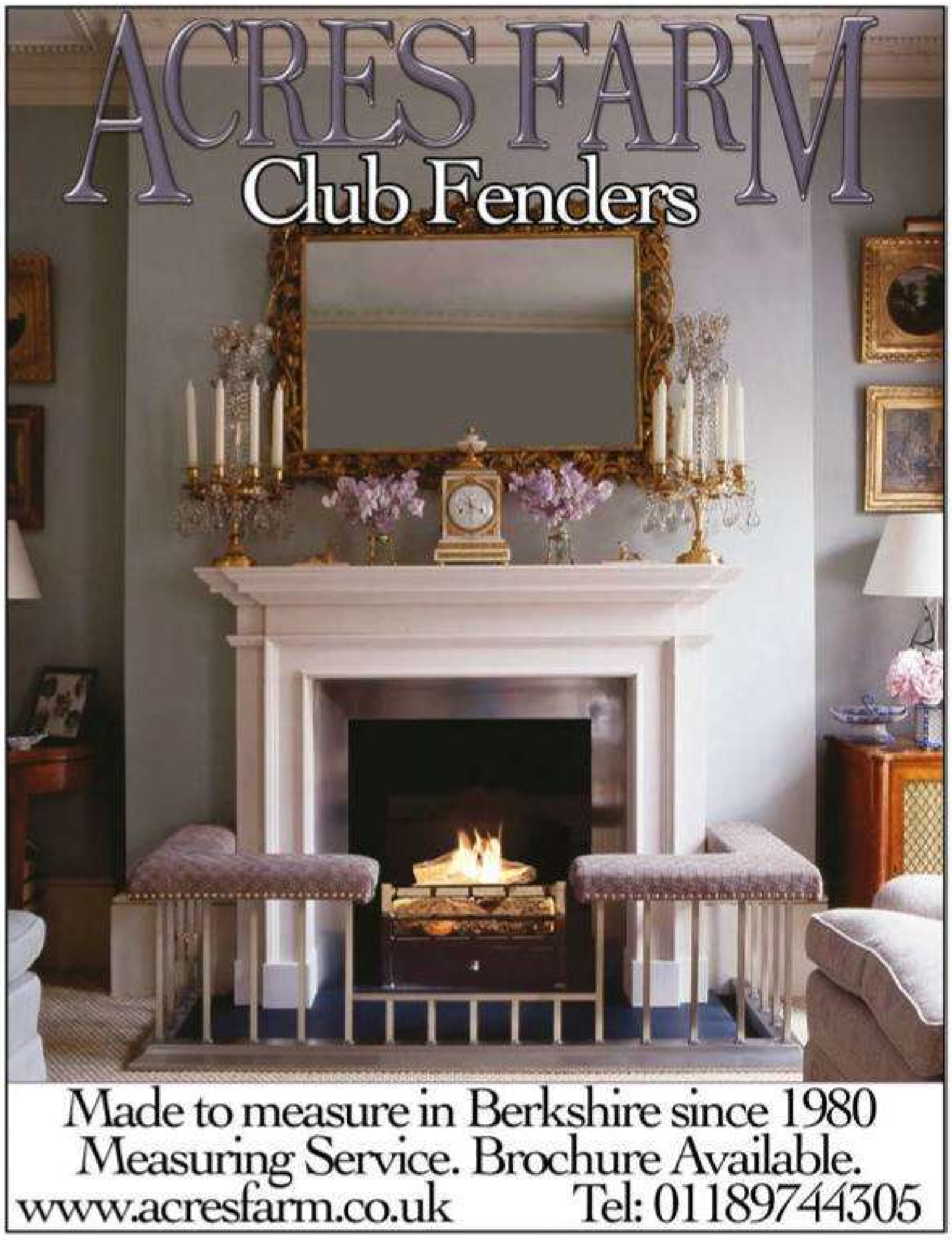
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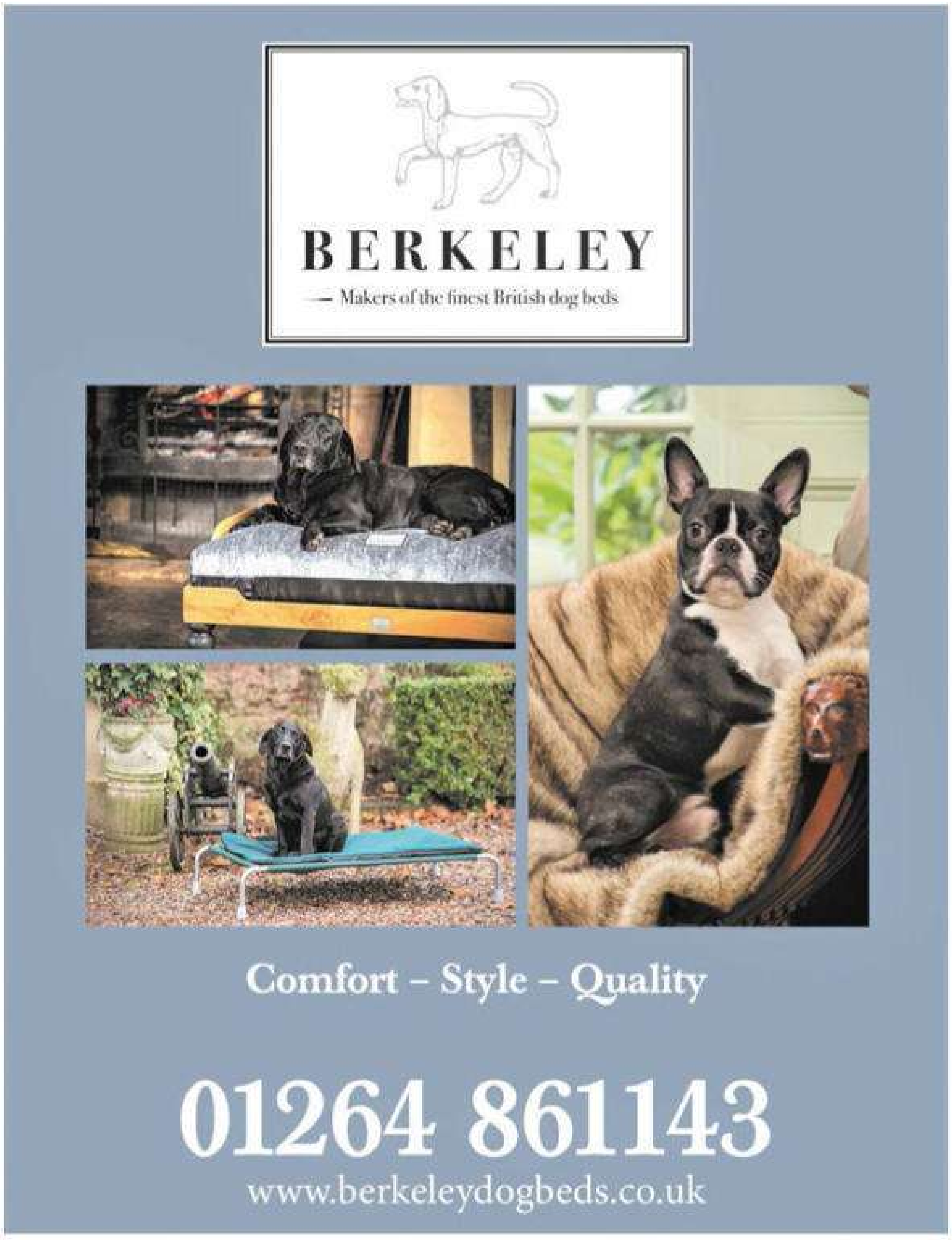
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PLACES TO STAY

CLEY WINDMILL B&B

A Grade II listed tower mill at Cley-next-the Sea, this historic structure was once used to grind flour. Today it welcomes guests with a beamed reception room and bar area, alongside a circular dining room with antique furniture and open fire. There are nine B&B rooms and two self-catering options, all of which have striking views. Also available as a self-catering property is The Old Bakery, a lovely family cottage sleeping six in nearby Blakeney (*blakeneycottage.com*). Doubles from £179 a night, self-catering from £450 for 3 nights.
Cley-next-the-Sea, NR25 7RP, Tel: 01263 740209; cleywindmill.co.uk

THE VICTORIA INN

Sitting between the beach and parklands, within walking distance of each, this nineteenth-century inn under the care of the Holkham estate has 20 rooms split equally between 'the Vic' and the Ancient House opposite. In the dog-friendly main building, first-floor rooms (try Hare Clump, Scarborough or Water Mire) afford spectacular views over the nature reserve. If without a canine companion, consider the Ancient House's rooms, including Fushia, with original features from its time as a bakery. Doubles from £200 a night.
Park Rd, Holkham, NR23 1RG, Tel: 01328 711008; holkham.co.uk

HOLKHAM LODGES

The lodge options at Holkham comprise five distinct properties, each sleeping two. Palmers Folly sits amidst parkland; Palmers Lodge offers romance in the form of its Grade II listed architecture; South Lodge East and South Lodge West sit side-by-side as sentinel to Holkham Hall; and the William Kent-designed Triumphal Arch has panoramic views along the avenue to the south and north. Lodges from £546 for three nights.
Park Rd, Holkham, NR23 1RG, Tel: 01328 711008; norfolkcottages.co.uk

APPLETON WATER TOWER

The soaring 60-foot heights of this Victorian red-brick building on the edge of the Sandringham estate afford wonderful 360-degree views across the Norfolk landscape from the rooftop terrace. It sleeps four people (the master bedroom with its open fire is particularly charming in the winter months), from £562 for four nights.
Tel: 01628 825925; landmarktrust.org.uk

HOLT HIDEAWAY

A delightful two-bedroom apartment in a Georgian townhouse, this property boasts an elegant interior created by its stylist owner including a smart wood-panelled reception room, luxurious bespoke four-poster bed, and Norfolk Natural Living toiletries. Sleeping two to four people, it forms part of membership site Kip Hideaways' UK-wide portfolio of affordable rentals and is available from £185–£200 a night *(membership £2.99 a month / £14 a year, no booking fees).*
kiphideaways.com ▶

FROM TOP The exterior of Appleton Water Tower; Grade II listed Cley Windmill; The Victoria Inn; Inside South Lodge West on Holkham Estate

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INDEPENDENT SHOPS

CONTEMPORARY AND COUNTRY

Formerly known as Norfolk By Design, this set-up presents affordable contemporary art and handmade objects by established artists and makers living and working in rural locations. Their regular pop-up exhibitions and events take place at non-gallery spaces such as Houghton Hall and Creake Abbey, with works also available online. *contemporaryandcountry.com*

GRACE & THORN

Newly opened as a second outpost to the main store in Hackney, this boutique florist features a range of dried flowers, plants and decorative pieces for the home set out in artful displays in the light-suffused unit adjacent to Star Plain Stores in the centre of Holt. *8a Fish Hill, Holt, NR25 6BD; graceandthorn.com*

STIFFKEY STORES

Billing itself as 'General Store / Coffee Shop / Flowers & Plants / Children's & Interiors / Everything In Between', this roadside spot is a local favourite: "It's a hidden gem," says designer Birdie Fortescue. "Follow the coastal route through Stiffkey towards the Burnhams – it's a treat, with lovely villages and tantalising glimpses of the sea." *Wells Rd, Stiffkey, NR23 1QH, Tel: 01328 830489; stiffkeystores.com*

LITTLEBLOOD

For antiques and vintage with a difference, this treasure trove offers a pleasingly eclectic mix of objects such as 1920s marionettes alongside furniture and lighting sourced by owners Helena and Jon. "Helena is also the most amazing upholsterer, creating beautiful pieces for Kit Kemp at the Firmdale Hotels," says designer Emma Deterding. *63a High St, Little Walsingham, NR22 6BZ, Tel: 07880 840141; littleblood.co.uk*

FROM TOP Verandah Holt's picturesque exterior; Littleblood owners Helena Lynch and Jon Baker surrounded by vintage treasures.

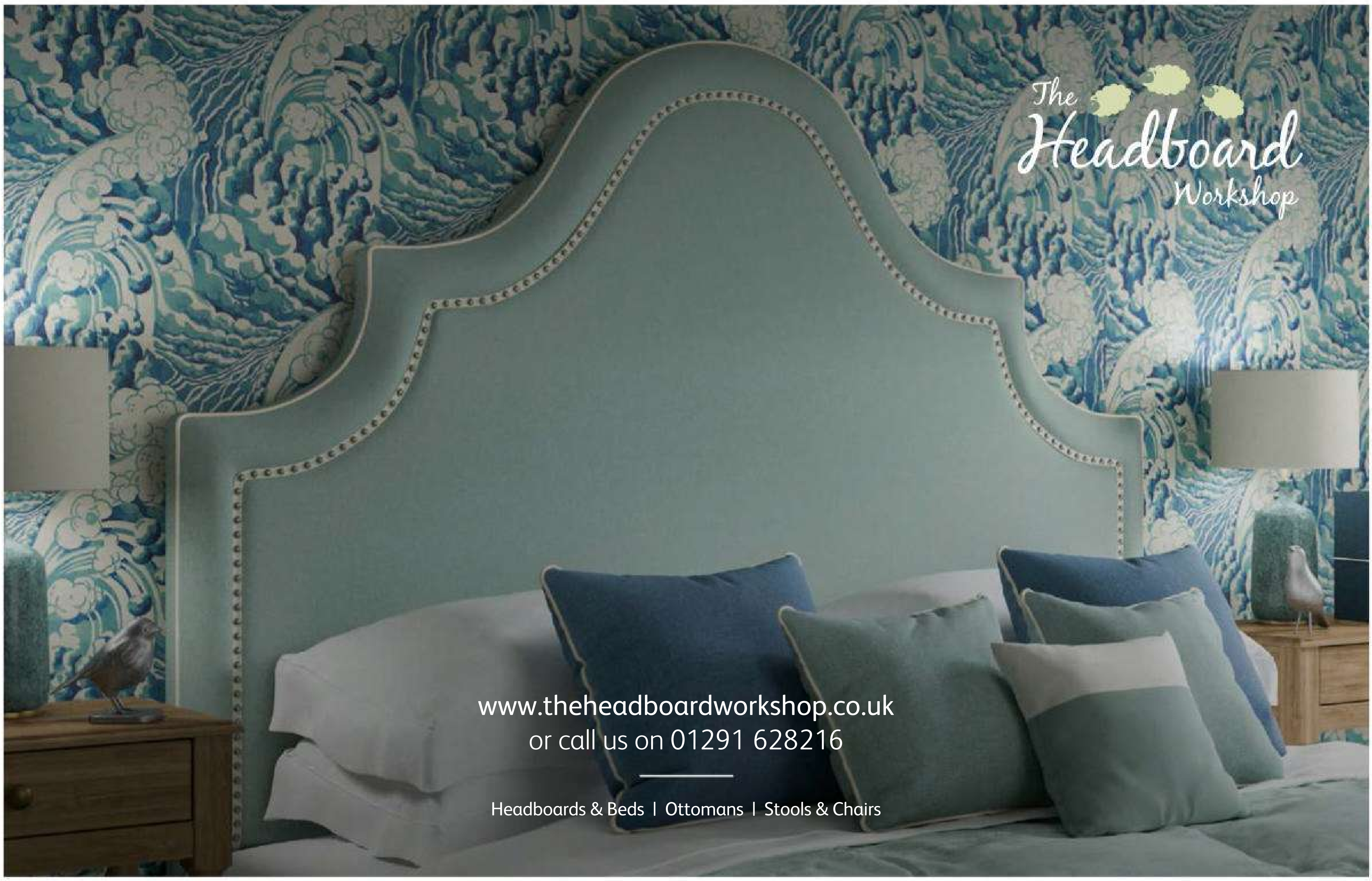
FEATURE EVE MIDDLETON **PHOTOGRAPHS** (VERANDAH HOLT) © VERANDAH HOLT; (LITTLEBLOOD) © TONY BUCKINGHAM

INSIDER INFORMATION

Birdie Fortescue is a designer and owner of the Birdie Fortescue brand and is based in North Norfolk

"Norfolk is particularly densely populated with large houses and stately homes – ancient Oxburgh Hall *(Oxborough, King's Lynn, PE33 9PS, Tel: 01366 328258; nationaltrust.org.uk/oxburgh-hall)* and Blickling Estate *(Ayslham, NR11 6NF, Tel: 01263 738030; nationaltrust.org.uk/blickling-estate)* are on our doorstep and both are breathtaking.

For a bit of retail therapy I also love exploring Bayfield Hall Antiques & Interiors *(Holt, NR25 7JN, Tel: 01263 715538; bayfieldhallantiques.com)*, housed in the old stable block at Bayfield Hall. There are a number of dealers here and I find that there is always a great variety of decorative objects, furniture and smaller pieces. The pretty market town of Holt is just a few minutes away from Bayfield Hall and is home to The Black Apollo Coffee House *(24 High St, Holt, NR25 6BH, Tel: 01263 712495, facebook.com/theblackapollocoffeehouse)* where they take coffee very seriously and have some amazing custom bean blends. Verandah Holt *(39a Bull St, Holt, NR25 6HP, Tel: 01263 712608)* is at the other end of the town and sells gifts and crafts including pottery by Karin Hossack and Miranda Berrow." ■



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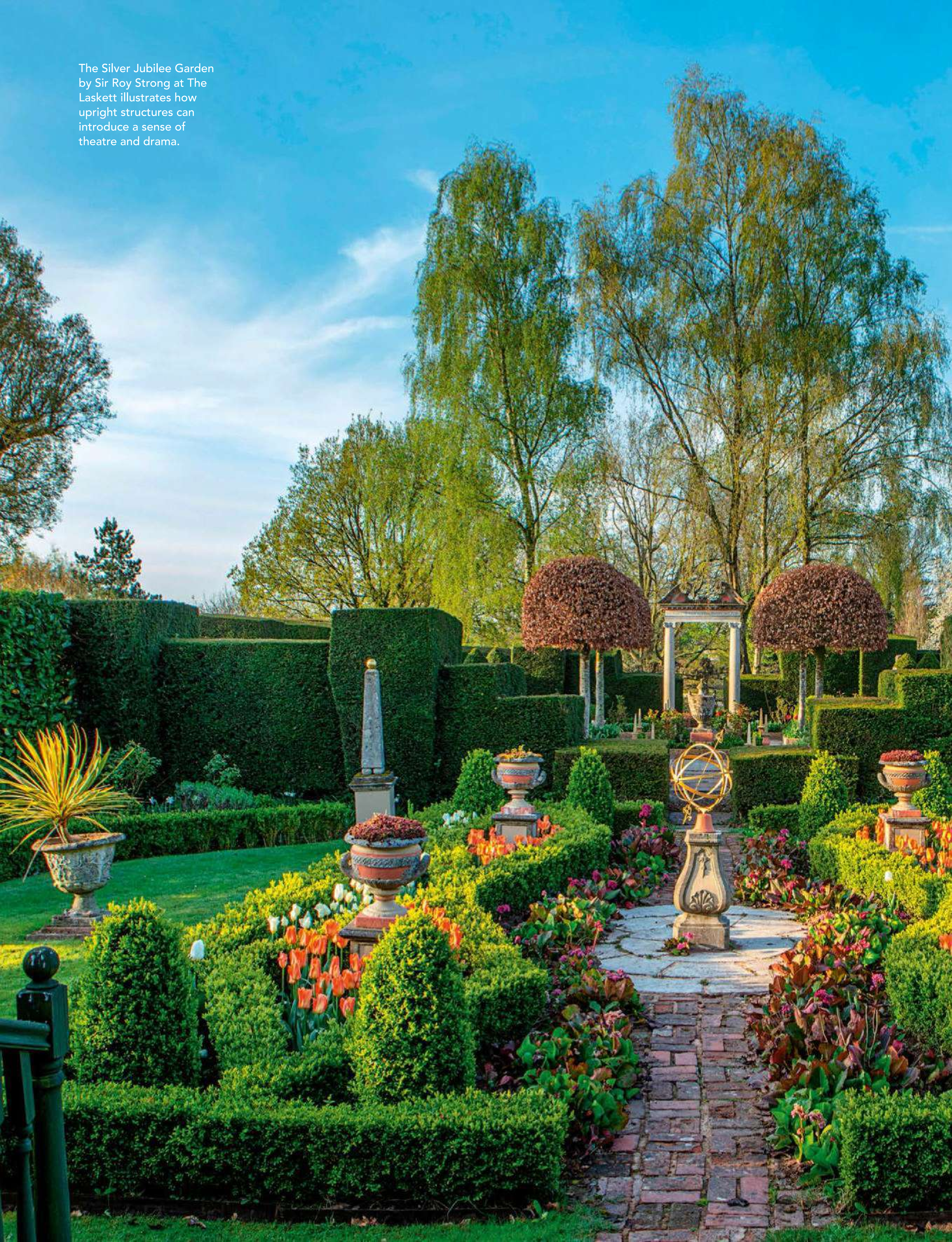
The Silver Jubilee Garden by Sir Roy Strong at The Laskett illustrates how upright structures can introduce a sense of theatre and drama.



Elevating BEAUTY

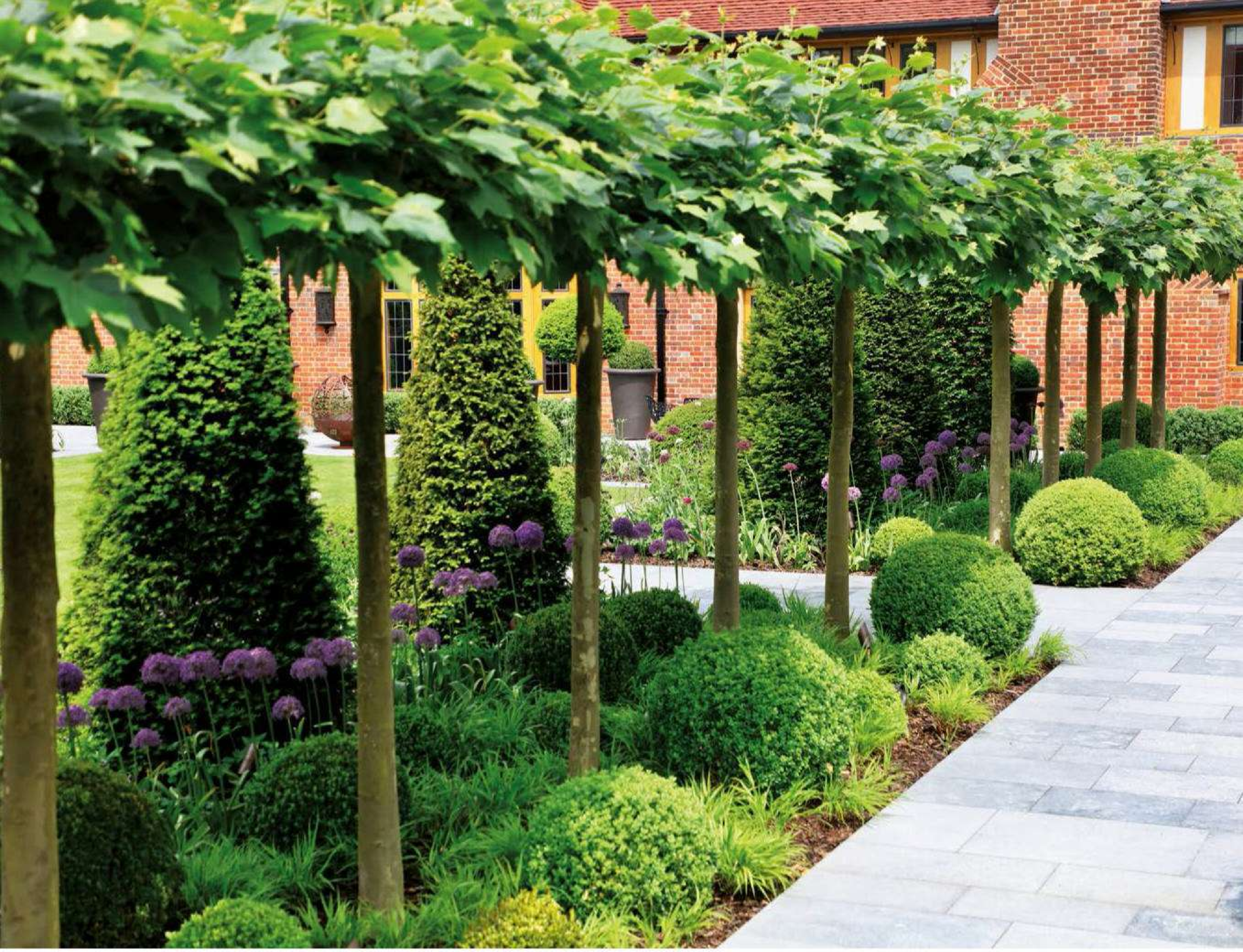
Discover how to use statement plants and features to add vertical interest to a garden

Often it is not so much the planting palette and choice of materials used that give professionally designed gardens the edge, but the way vertical design opportunities are employed. Introducing height into a herbaceous border or expansive lawn will immediately draw the eye, lift the gaze and emphasise the three-dimensional aspect of the space, making a more attractive and inviting setting. This can be achieved in a variety of ways, from adding outdoor structures such as follies and classical shelters to more decorative pieces including obelisks and planters. Plants can also play their part. Climbers – neatly trained or wild and rambling – will soar skywards, adding interest and softening walls and buildings. These, along with trees and shrubs, will also extend the nectar-rich resources for pollinators, increasing biodiversity.

AN EXTRA DIMENSION

Introducing height to a garden will elevate it from being dull and flat to intriguing and cossetting in an instant. Just as a lone tree on the horizon draws the eye, the same occurs in the garden, immediately lending a sense of scale and form, and arousing curiosity. There are many ways to exploit this design principle, and learning how from professional designers will invariably enhance the results.

"All gardens benefit from having a 'ceiling' both visually and atmospherically," says landscape designer Adrienne Hendy Curzon. "By this, we mean a reference point where the eye stops. This creates intimacy in an outdoor space, and a great way to achieve this is with the placement of trees, particularly with clear stems, in architectural groupings." ▶



ABOVE A row of pleached London plane trees lends height and rhythm to this garden designed by Hendy Curzon. **TOP RIGHT** Run by the Fortescue Garden Trust, The Garden House in Devon boasts herbaceous borders filled with towering perennials. **MIDDLE RIGHT** Italian cypress trees from Architectural Plants bring drama and form to an open plot. **BOTTOM RIGHT** Tall cylindrical planters will add height to a corner or patio. *Burnham Vintage Planters, from £39.99, Foras*

SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURES

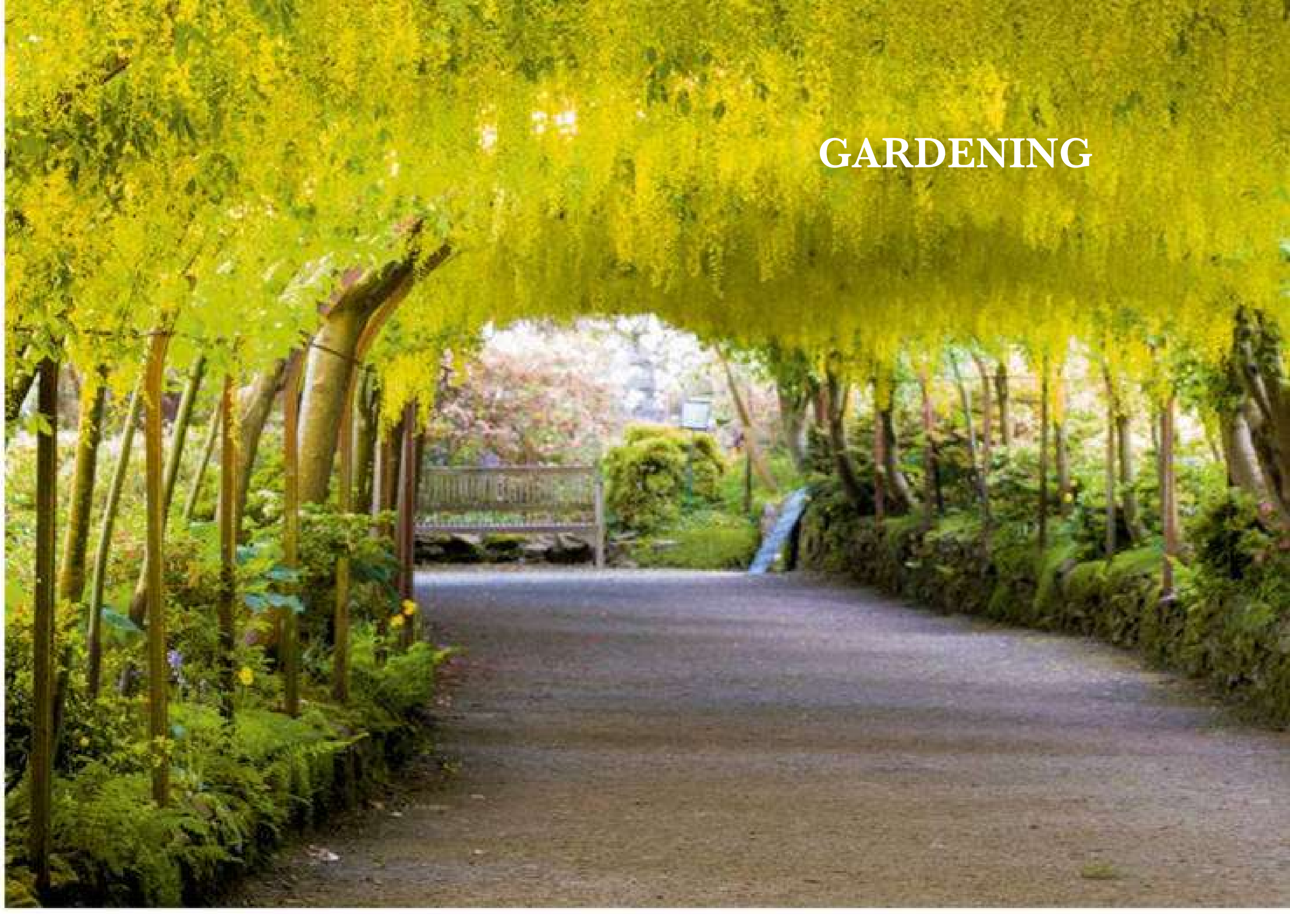
From the neo-classical temples of Stourhead to the architectural Arts and Crafts features of Harold Peto's Iford Manor, placing substantial structures in amongst planting to add drama and intrigue has long been practiced. The contrasting forms and materials punctuate the scene, and it takes skill and knowledge to make the right choices. Alex Puddy, owner of Architectural Heritage, explains: "Having supplied a number of larger structural pieces to private clients and garden professionals, I have noticed the need for a designed space to thoughtfully accommodate larger pieces, be they a sculpture, temple or pergola. Careful choice of position and consideration of the relative scales to other elements in the space and beyond is essential."

Obelisks, stone monoliths and structures such as arches and arbours will all help to form the garden 'bones', helping to lead the eye through the space and create a sense of rhythm. Winter's stark beauty is the perfect time to assess the existing layout of our gardens. Take a walk through the space, spending time viewing the plot from key angles such as from entranceways, favourite seating spots and, primarily, from inside the house to ensure any new structures will have maximum impact.

UPSTANDING BEAUTIES

From mature and stately specimens to newly planted saplings, trees will introduce tall, shapely outlines and add depth and interest to any style or size of garden. Planted en masse, clustered together in a copse or orchard, or evenly spaced to line a path or vista, trees provide valuable habitats for wildlife and, often, a seasonally changing feature to admire.

"There are many ways to add vertical height into your garden," Guy Watts, owner of Architectural Plants, says. "There's an enormous choice – from the very Italianate *Cupressus sempervirens* (Mediterranean cypress) to the more tropical *Dicksonia antarctica* (tree fern) with its broad canopies and firework fronds. The more traditional *Carpinus betulus* (hornbeam) can be shaped into any form or structure, a favourite of ours being large proscenium arches. Framed, ▶



Inspiring gardens to visit

Places to seek vertical design and planting inspiration

Athelhampton, Dorset
An Arts and Crafts-style garden featuring enchanting stone-walled gardens, stately clipped hedges, topiary and endless tree-lined pathways to explore.
Tel: 01305 848363; athelhampton.com

Arundel Castle Gardens, West Sussex
Home to the Duke of Norfolk, these gardens are a series of high-hedged rooms, each with their own individual style. The Collector Earl's Garden, opened in 2008 and designed by the famous Bannermans Julian and Isabel, it employs various techniques of using height effectively.
Tel: 01903 882173; arundelcastle.org

Hampton Court Palace, Surrey
One of the jewels of Henry VIII's Royal Palace, the Privy Garden is a stunning example of how a simple geometric layout and repetitive topiary can form a truly magical space. A restoration of William III's baroque design of 1702, it impresses on a grand scale.
Tel: 020 3166 6000; hrp.org.uk

Bodnant Gardens, Conwy, Wales
Home to the majestic laburnum pergola, this 80-acre hillside garden features Italianate gardens, an extensive Rose Terrace and formal gardens full of standout structures.
Tel: 01492 650460; nationaltrust.org.uk

The Laskett, Herefordshire
The lifelong passion of Sir Roy Strong and his late wife, Julia Trevelyan Oman, these formal gardens are truly unique and theatrical. Topiary, classical structures and a strong sense of design combine to create four acres that explore height and drama (*see p134–135*).
Tel: 01372 384045; thelaskett.org.uk

The Hepworth Wakefield Garden, Yorkshire
A newly opened garden by Tom Stuart-Smith. With prairie-style planting punctuated by statement trees and modern sculpture – including pieces by Barbara Hepworth – it demonstrates how vertical structures can add impact and interest to large, landscaped spaces.
Tel: 01924 247360; hepworthwakefield.org

Levens Hall, Cumbria
Dating from 1690, these breathtaking gardens showcase majestic yew and box topiary. Underplanted with seasonal bedding, they provide endless ideas for using height, shape and scale.
Tel: 01539 560321; levenshall.co.uk

ABOVE The Laburnum Arch at Bodnant Garden in Wales is a true seasonal spectacle. Planted in 1880 and measuring 55 metres long, the tunnel of golden blooms is the longest and oldest in the UK.

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pleached London plane trees can create what I like to call 'hedges on stilts'."

Training and shaping trees is a vast area of expertise and creates stunning results. Flat-topped umbrella-shaped hornbeams planted close together can create an elegant leafy pergola, whilst a multi-stemmed white Himalayan birch forms a showstopping feature against a dark yew or holly hedge.

CLOAK WITH FOLIAGE

Growing plants vertically, whether hanging down from wall tops and planters or training them up trellis, is a useful way to make the most of limited space and soften the appearance of boundaries. The latest approach to this, particularly popular in townhouse gardens, city terraces and courtyards, is to cultivate 'living walls'. Usually a close-knit arrangement of foliage plants raised in a pocket or modular stacking system, the aim is to create a fascinating and tactile living tapestry that adds depth, character and lends a cossetting feel to the space. Select plants to suit the location: ferns, creeping Jenny and ivy suit damp, shady spots, whilst culinary herbs bask in the sun and work well next to a garden cooking area.

STRETCHING SKYWARDS

Whether seeking a plethora of blooms or columns of lush foliage, climbing plants are indispensable in any garden. Roses, wisteria, honeysuckle and jasmine all present the opportunity to introduce colour, sensational perfume and a valuable nectar source for insects. Rose types include sprawling ramblers and more upright climbers.

Experts at Peter Beales Roses suggest varieties Della Balfour, Bienvenue, Pippin, Danse de Feu and Aloha for growing over sheds, obelisks, small arches and doorways, and the more vigorous Rambling Rector, Ethel and *Rosa helenae* for growing into trees and up larger buildings. The company's head rosarian, Ian Limmer, shares this advice: "To ensure your roses bloom from top to bottom, ramblers should be trained horizontally. This encourages further lateral growth ▶

ABOVE Elevate the interest with a simple yet imposing garden structure such as this classical limestone and oak pergola. *The Pergola, £14,400, Architectural Heritage*

RIGHT Pairing an elegant zinc planter and obelisk is ideal for introducing height into a smaller space. *Belgian Circle Planter, from £345, A Place in The Garden*

Training evergreen climbers such as star jasmine against the house will add interest and draw the eye upwards. Design by Randle Siddeley.

LEFT A strong growing and healthy rambling rose with soft pale pink blooms, glossy leaves and a fruity scent. *The Lady of the Lake, £19.50 (bare root), David Austin Roses*

ABOVE Borders of towering perennials, clipped topiary and a climber-laden gazebo create an enticing pathway to a greenhouse. *Round Gazebo, from £435, Agriframes*

BELOW LEFT Introduce floral accents to draw the eye upwards. *Clematis Texensis 'Princess Kate', £15 (two-litre pot), Taylors Clematis*

ABOVE Rambling roses will quickly smother an arch or arbour, providing interest that changes with the seasons. *Rambling Rector Rose, from £19.50, Peter Beales Roses*

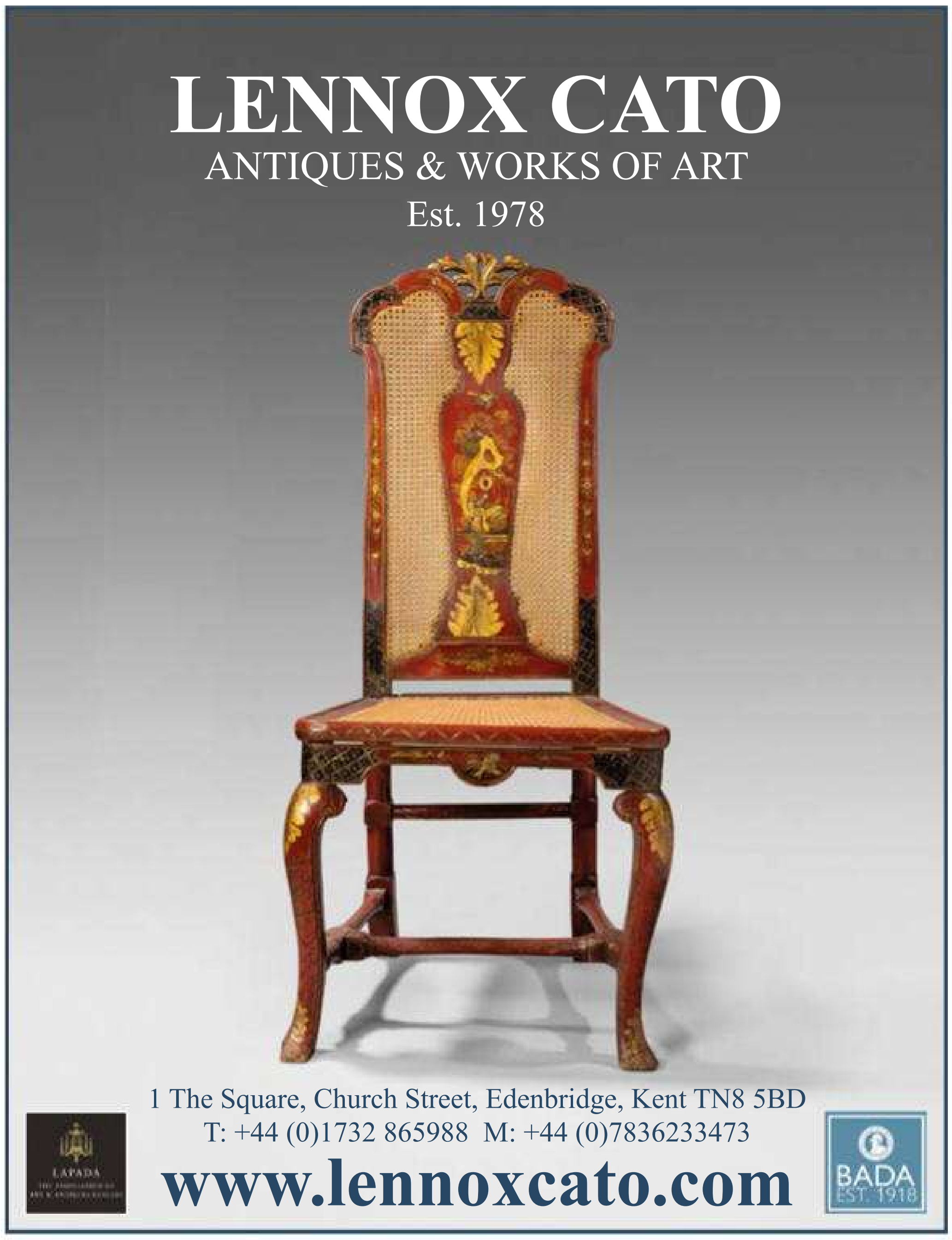
and lower-flowering blooms. When pruning vertically grown climbers and ramblers, the rose should be divided into thirds and cut to height for better overall bloom coverage."

With over 300 species available, clematis plants are useful vertical gardening options for year-round colour and interest. Chris Cocks from Taylors Clematis recommends the evergreen *cirrhosa* species that flower from November until February: "'Freckles' is quite stunning with its red speckles, and 'Jingle Bells' has lovely small cream/white flowers. These don't require any real pruning as they flower on old growth, so are very easy to look after. They do like a sunny aspect that's sheltered from strong winds in order to flower their socks off." The winter-flowering *Clematis tangutica* species grow tall with dense foliage cover, which lends them to covering large arbours and disguising ugly oil tanks and garages. Cut them back in mid-March to about three feet to keep them under control.

Freestanding obelisks, columns and arches make perfect supports for smaller perennial or annual climbers, such as morning glory, sweet peas and black-eyed Susan, and are useful for interspersing amongst borders and topping planters.

Substantial and long-lived varieties such as wisteria, climbing hydrangeas and potato vines require a stronger framework, so avoid timber structures and opt for quality metalwork instead. These non-invasive species also work well trained up brickwork. "If you long to have more vertical structure and interest, you can't go wrong with *Trachelospermum jasminoides*," says celebrated garden designer Randle Siddeley, The Lord Kenilworth. "It is worth budgeting for some mature specimens, but once planted against the house, you won't regret it as they instantly soften the brickwork and enhance the facade. An additional benefit is the exquisite perfumed scent you will experience on a summer's evening." ■

FEATURE JILL MORGAN
PHOTOGRAPHS P134 © CLIVE NICHOLS. P137 (BODNANT) © NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES / JOE WAINWRIGHT; (FORAS) © PAUL TIBBS. P139 (RANDLE SIDDELEY) © GEORGINA VINEY



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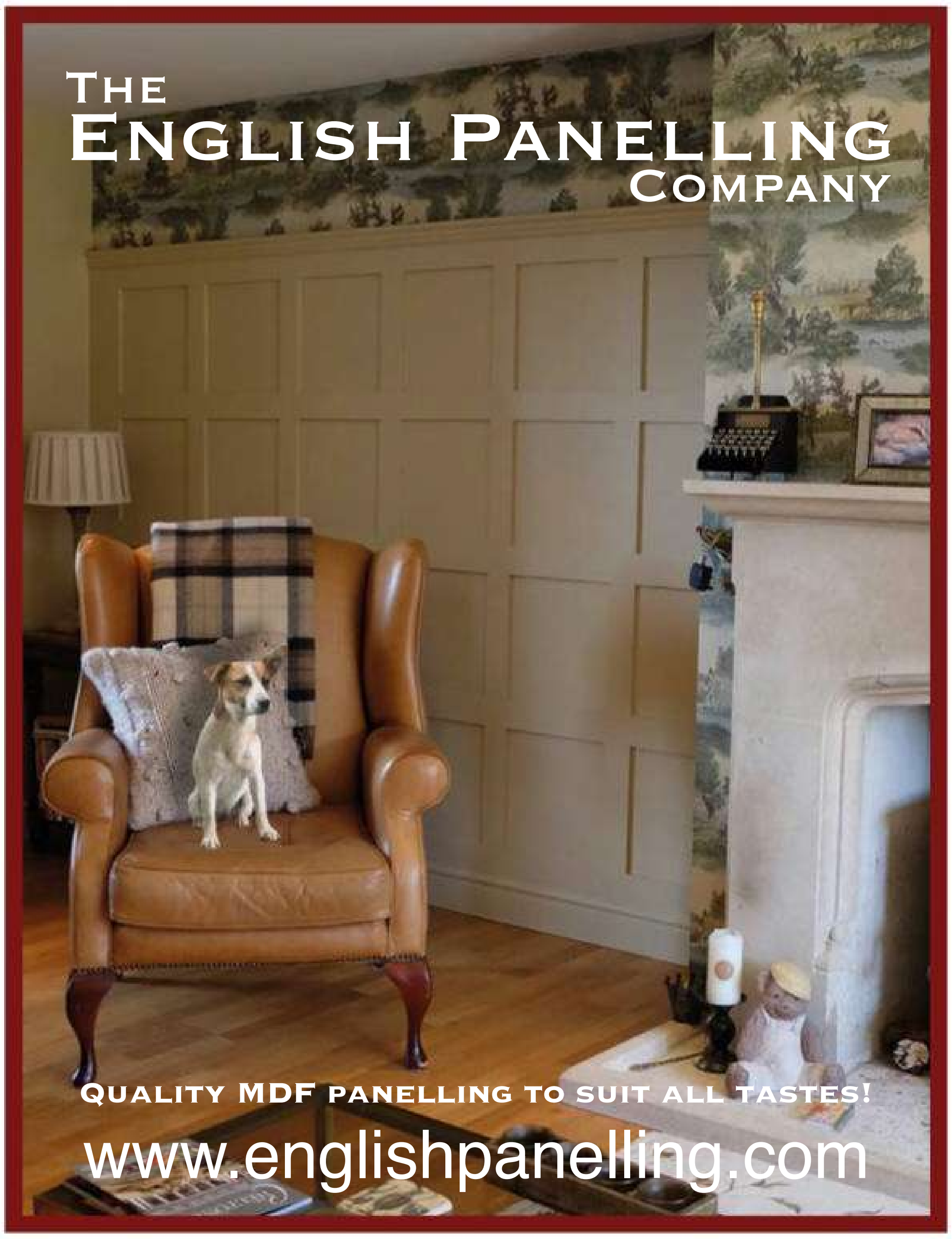

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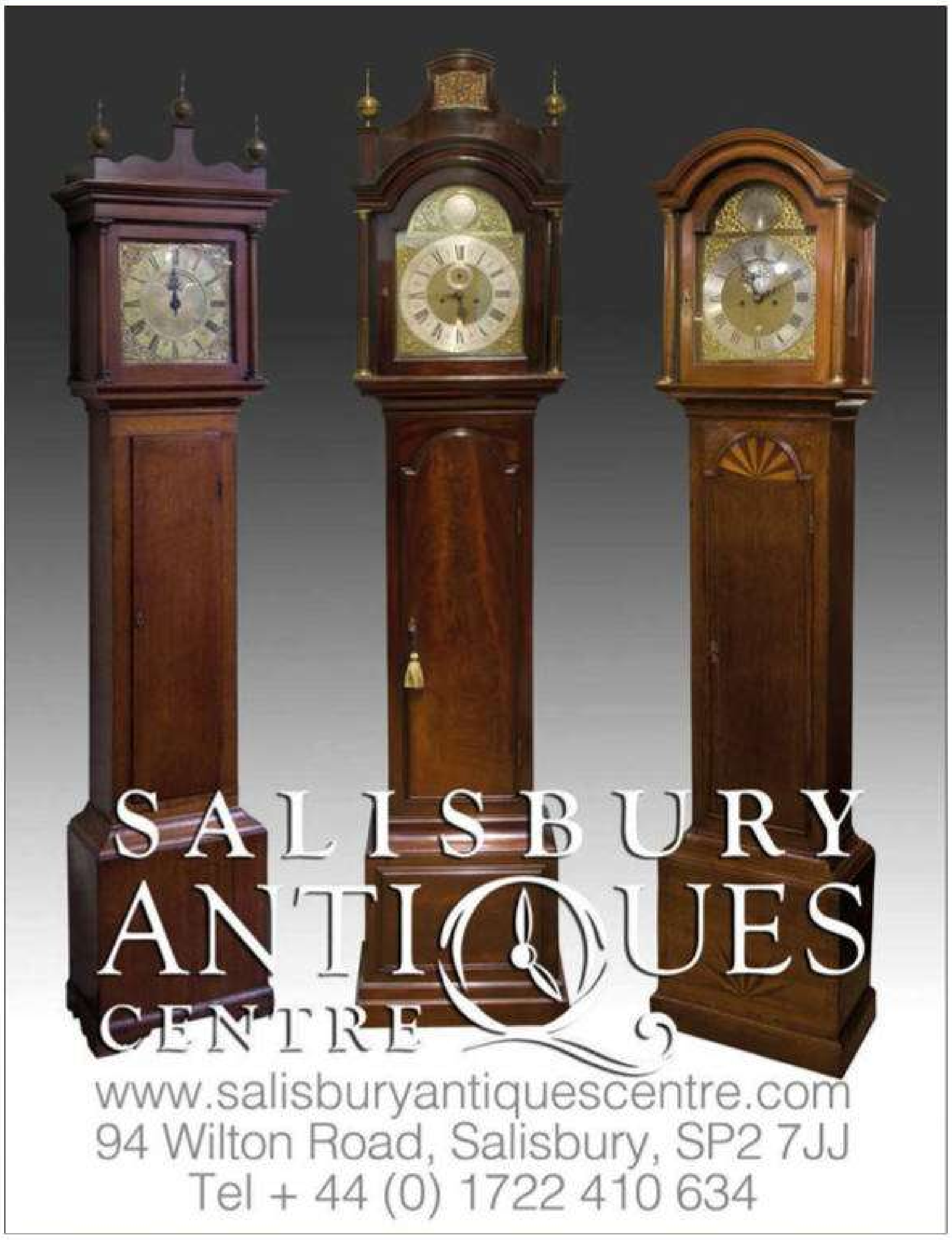

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MY DESIGN HEROES

Founder and creative director of Designers Guild, Tricia Guild OBE, on Charles and Ray Eames

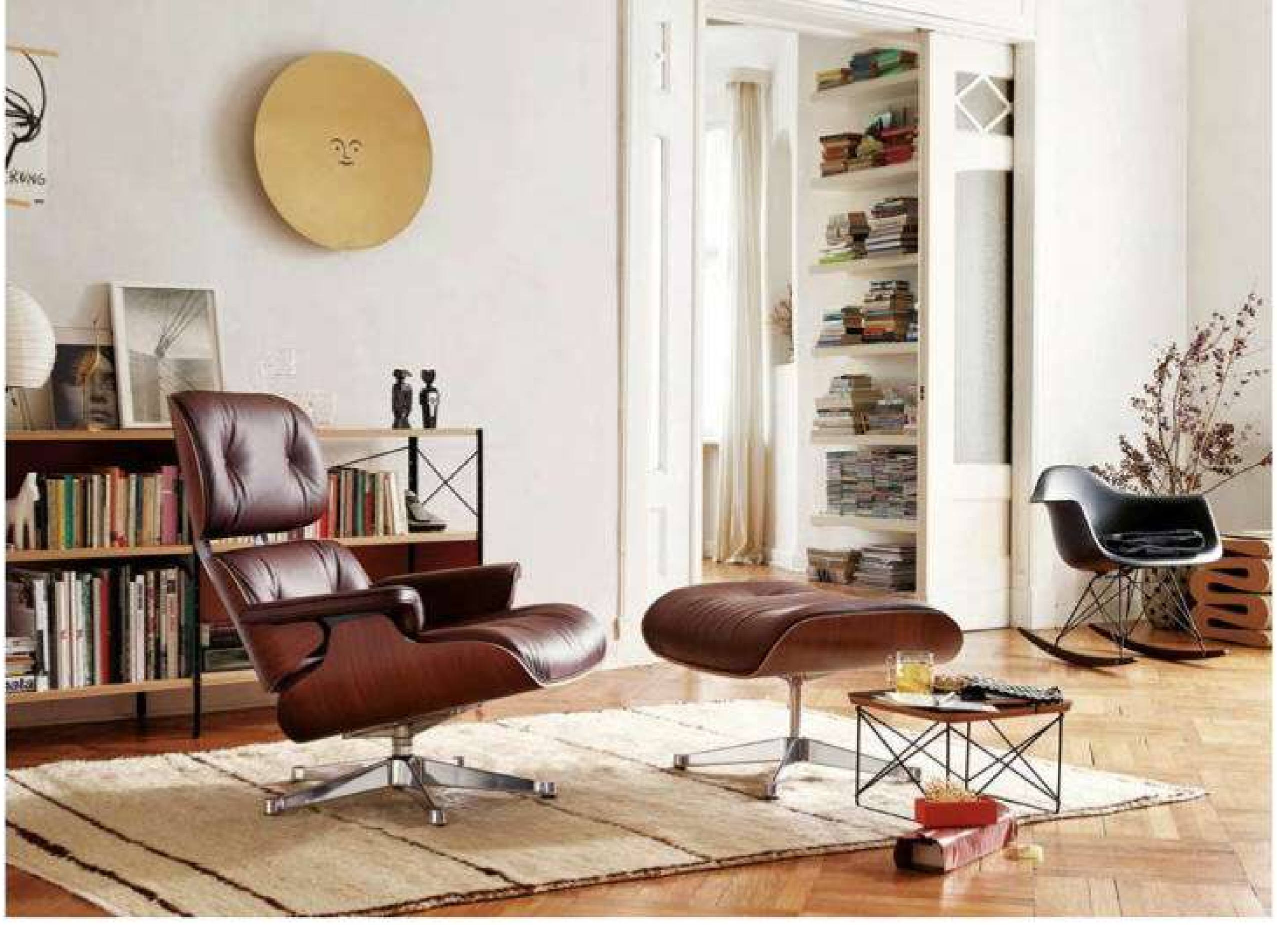
"My parents were quite contemporary-minded, and I have always been the same – perhaps now more than ever. When I was growing up our home had a modern mix of furniture and textures, including an Eames lounge chair and ottoman. I always loved its sense of comfort and striking style.

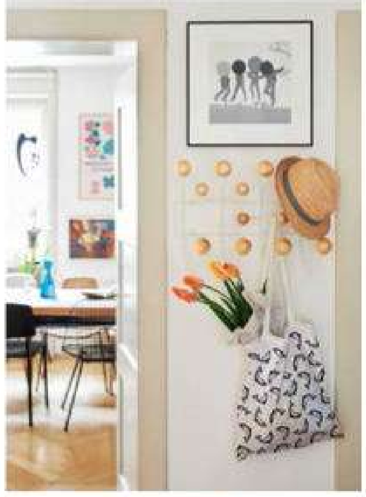
The husband-and-wife team of Charles and Ray Eames is iconic. They began working together at Cranbrook Academy of Art, Michigan, in the late 1930s, producing pieces that broke the mould then and yet still feel fresh today. There is such an ease and confidence to their designs. Their classic pieces transcend style, whilst being utterly unique, and true to themselves.

One of the remarkable things about the Eameses is that they practised in so many different disciplines. They are renowned not only for ground-breaking furniture design in moulded plywood, fibreglass and metal, but also for innovative architecture, graphic design, exhibition design, textiles, film-making and even children's toys.

I love to experiment, and the influence that Charles and Ray Eames have had on my work over the years, ever since I founded Designers Guild in 1970, is that they were determined to reinvent, to say something in a new and exciting way. The open-plan, prefabricated house that they designed, and lived in from 1949 for the rest of their lives, is a landmark of 20th century architecture.

The Eameses were completely of their moment and contemporary to their time, and yet they have stood the test of time; their work never feels dated, whether it is a coat rack with wooden balls, a coloured fibreglass dining chair or a luxurious leather desk chair. In my opinion, they changed the way we view and use everyday items." ■



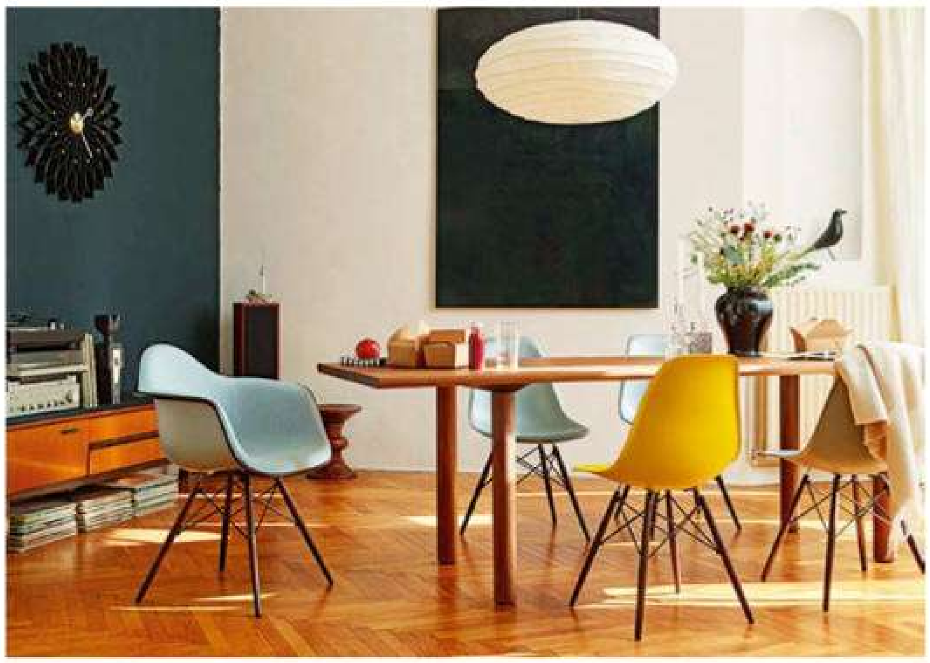


ABOVE The Vitra Eames Lounge Chair and Ottoman, designed in 1956 as an updated version of the English club chair, is one of the best-known furniture designs of the 21st century. *From £5,015, Nest*

RIGHT This rack was designed by the husband-and-wife team in 1953 to encourage children to hang up their belongings, and is now a design classic. *Vitra Eames Hang It All, £255, Nest*

FAR RIGHT Charles and Ray Eames (1907–1978 and 1912–1988).

BELOW Tricia Guild is inspired by the way Charles and Ray Eames produced designs that both broke the mould and stood the test of time. *Madhya fabric, £140 a metre, and wallpaper, £195 a roll; selection of furniture, all Designers* Guild



ABOVE Designed by Charles and Ray Eames in 1950 to fit the contours of the human body, the DSW (Dining Side Wood) chair was the first industrially manufactured plastic chair. *Vitra DSW Eames plastic side chair with dark or golden maple base, £410, Nest*

FEATURE KATHERINE SORRELL **PHOTOGRAPHS** CHARLES AND RAY EAMES © 2021 EAMES OFFICE, LLC (EAMESOFFICE.COM)

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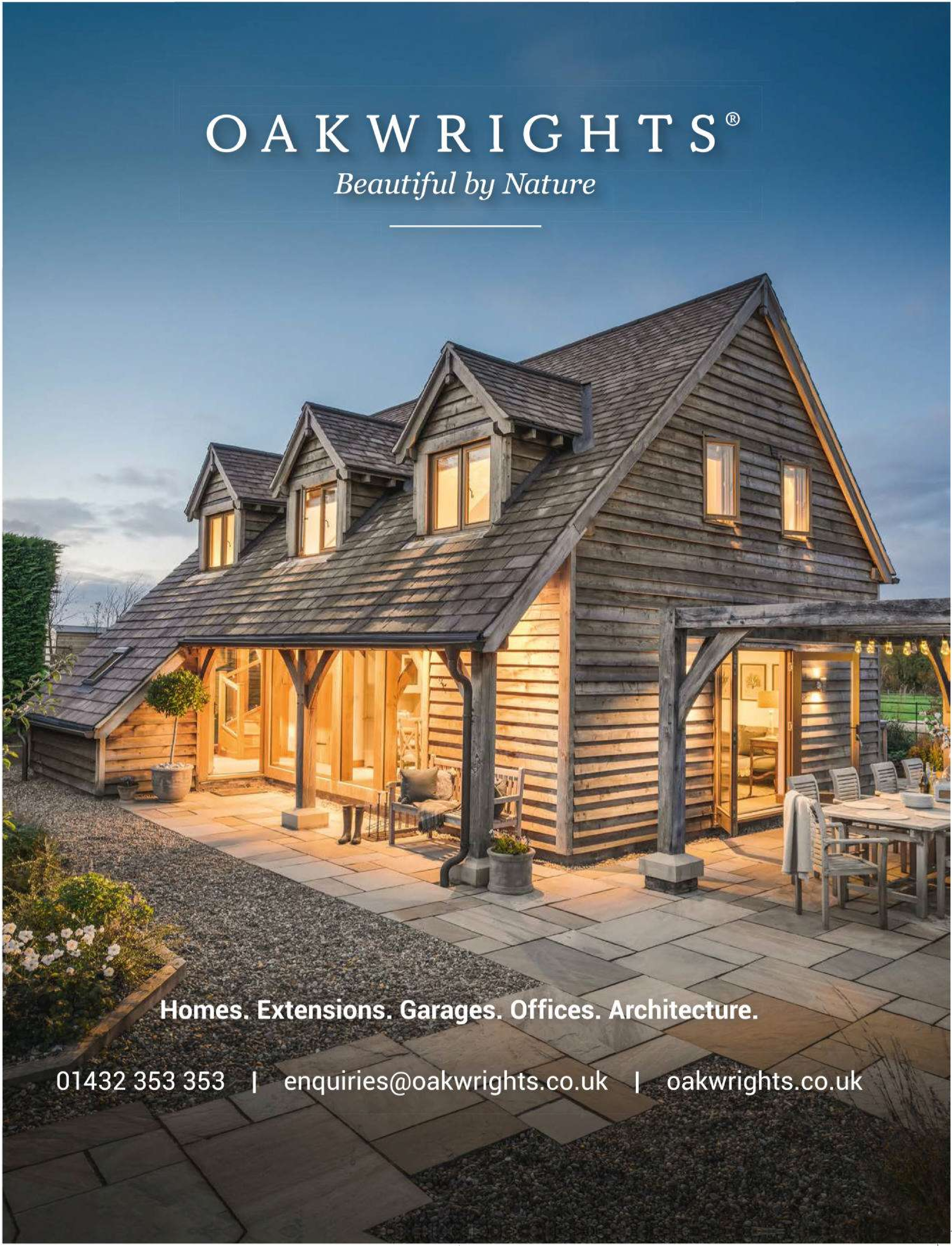
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